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A SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR THE REORGANIZATION  
OF A  
CHURCH SCHOOL ON THE BASIS OF EXPERIMENTATION

By  
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Gudrun Kartevold  
A.B. Adelphi College

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## INTRODUCTION.

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF A  
CHURCH SCHOOL ON THE BASIS OF EXPERIMENTATION.

INTRODUCTION.

I. THE PROBLEM OF THE STUDY.

The books that have been written and the courses that have been introduced in the various schools throughout the country show that great progress is being made in the field of religious education. Theoretically, the great advances have been made very rapidly, but practically, improvements have been taking place much more slowly. This significant fact in the educational progress of the church was brought home personally to the writer in so vivid a way that it has culminated in an attack upon the problem which forms the basis of this study.

Being closely connected with Trinity Church School, Brooklyn, New York,--first as a pupil, then as a teacher, and finally as a part-time worker,--the writer had, for a number of years, been familiar with existing conditions there. However, while perhaps conscious, in a vague way, of the fact that these conditions were not altogether ideal, it was not until she became acquainted with modern principles and methods of Religious Education, through study at the Biblical Seminary in New York, that the



writer began to realize how far from ideal these conditions really were. Others, too, had begun to realize this and gradually a few outstanding changes were made. This beginning was so successful that it has been a challenge to undertake a more detailed and more far-reaching program of reorganization. This undertaking was started two years ago and is at present in process.

## II. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.

It is the purpose of this study to analyze and record the various steps involved in this process of reorganization of Trinity Church School and to formulate such principles as may evolve from the study. Such an analytical record and such a formulation of principles may, it is hoped, prove helpful to others who are faced with a similar task of reorganization.

## III. THE METHOD OF PROCEDURE IN THE STUDY.

The study will begin with a brief history of Trinity Church School, in order to help orient us in our problem, so that we may proceed more intelligently. With this background, a diagnosis of the needs of Trinity Church School will be made on the basis of a survey of present conditions. Then, a detailed report of the process of reorganization, as determined by these needs,

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will be given. And finally, there will be an attempt to estimate what has been done and what remains to be done, followed by a summary of the principles of re-organization evolved from the study as a whole.

## CHAPTER I

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL

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## CHAPTER I

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL

## I. ITS ORIGINS

## A. Informal Beginnings

At the beginning of the eighties (1880) a group of Norwegian Christians of the Lutheran faith gathered together at the home of P--G--, in Brooklyn, in order to study the Word of God, to strengthen one another in the Christian faith, and to spread the Gospel among relatives, friends, and neighbors.<sup>1</sup> Every week a special meeting was held for the children who received religious instruction under the consecrated leadership of P--G--, himself.<sup>2</sup>

In the early part of 1885, a Norwegian pastor gave a series of talks on the necessity of doing some definite christian work for the enriching of one's own spiritual life and for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

Through these home gatherings and this special call to greater service, it became evident that something more

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1. cf. Old Note Book --- June 21, 1885

2. Interview with H--A--. March 8, 1931

definite had to be done to reach all those unchurched Norwegian Lutherans who had settled in Brooklyn. The whole situation was discussed among the different individuals who had already shown qualities of leadership, and among the pastors of the Norwegian Seamen's Church who had helped the permanent settlers in times of need.<sup>1.</sup>

On June 21, 1885, a meeting was held at the home of P--G--, to make more definite plans for the task that was before the group. That day, "The Free Lutheran Mission Society" of Brooklyn was organized with a membership of ten staunch, hard-working laymen whose purpose was to help develop Christian lives and to win others for Christ through those spiritual gifts which God had given them. To accomplish this purpose, it was decided, among other things, to conduct a Sunday School under the leadership of Christian teachers. A special effort was to be made to gather those children of Lutheran parents who did not attend Sunday School elsewhere. Any other children, who were interested in the activities of the school, were to be most cordially welcomed within the group. A very definite curriculum was selected, including the Bible History (to be memorized),<sup>2.</sup> the Catechism and the singing of hymns.

On Thursday, February 10, 1886, some of the women of the Society started a week-day school of religion

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1. cf. Korte Omrids af Trefoldigheds Lutherske Menighed  
Brooklyn, N. Y. page 6
2. cf. Old Note Book --- August 10, 1885.

which lasted from an hour and a half to two hours each week. Aside from certain specifications regarding the opening and closing exercises and the study of Bible History, the teachers were given the freedom of arranging their own programs.<sup>1</sup> Problems soon arose. It was difficult to get the children to come and spend several hours at this school, after they had been in Public School all day. Then, too, there was the problem of getting someone to be in charge of the group.

On November 2, 1886, it was definitely decided that the "Children's School" should no longer meet on Thursdays, but on Sunday afternoons at two o'clock. At the same time, three men were selected to organize the Sunday School on a more definite basis.<sup>2</sup>

#### B. Organization of Church.

Thus "The Free Lutheran Mission Society" which had started in the Gowanus Section of Brooklyn grew, spreading its message among the Norwegians in and around New York. Branches of the Society were started in Bath Junction, Greenpoint, New Brighton, Port Richmond and Elizabethport.<sup>3</sup>

In July 1890, the Norwegian Lutheran Church head-

- 
- 1. cf. Old Note Book --- February 10, 1886.
  - 2. cf. Ibid. --- November 2, 1886.
  - 3. cf. Korte Omrids af Trefoldigheds Lutherske Menighed  
Brooklyn, N. Y. page 6

quarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, sent a representative to study the situation. For a whole month this pastor preached in the Norwegian Seamen's Church and worked among those Norwegians who had no church home in America.<sup>1.</sup>

The need for an organized church became more and more evident. Finally, a committee was selected to consider plans for the organization of a church.<sup>1.</sup>

On July 29, 1890, a group of seventy men and women met and formally organized the Church in the name of the Trinity. "Stunden var gribende og hoitidelig." This gripping dedication service was followed by a business meeting at which the officers of the congregation were elected.<sup>1.</sup>

#### C. The Church School from 1890 - 1902.

The Sunday School of the Gowanus section which was organized on November 2, 1886, under the auspices of the "Free Lutheran Mission Society of Brooklyn", became part of Trinity Church in 1890.<sup>1.</sup>

Things progressed splendidly, as may be noted from the Superintendent's report which was given in the "Kredsbladet" of January 1902.

#### Sunday School Report.

"The religious training of the children of South Brooklyn has been carried on regularly from nine to ten o'clock every Sunday morning since Trinity Church was organized. The Sunday School

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1. cf. Korte Omrids af Trefoldigheds Lutherske Menighed Brooklyn, N. Y. page 6

had been started before that time, but it received its great incentive at the time of the organization of the church, as may be noted by the records. From three teachers and ten children, the enrollment has increased to approximately thirty teachers and three hundred children, including a Bible Class of thirty confirmed members under the instruction of the Pastor. As a rule, the Sunday School has a yearly outing, as well as four weeks vacation during the hottest part of the summer. At Christmas time a special festival has been held for the Sunday School children. In addition, an effort has been made to brighten the hearts of poor children, by giving a Christmas gift to several orphanages. The textbooks which have been used, are: Lokkenskaard's A.B.C. book for the younger children, Bible history and Explanation for the older children. It is very important that the teachers be patient and persevering and steadfast in prayer for a blessing from the Great Shepherd who has commanded his disciples to 'Watch His lambs', so that He might be able to say to each one of His servants at the close of his life, 'Enter into the glory of the Lord'.

The Superintendent."<sup>1</sup>

## II. ITS DEVELOPMENT.

### A. A Gradual Growth through the Teachers' Meetings.

The monthly teachers' meetings, which were held faithfully from the time of the organization of the Church School to February 1913, played a great part in the development of the school.<sup>2</sup>

#### 1. Through Devotions.

Each meeting opened and closed with prayer,<sup>2</sup> and that spirit of devotion seemed to radiate throughout

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1. Original translation from "Kort Omrids af Trefoldigheds Lutherske Menighed Brooklyn, N. Y. page 7-8
  2. Cf. Secretary's Note Book 1904- 1913.



all the meetings, even in those of a purely business nature. Occasionally, joint meetings of an inspirational type were held with the teachers of other Church Schools. At these meetings, some such topic as "The Sunday School and its meaning" would be discussed with the result that the teachers were encouraged to do their work with greater zeal than they had ever done it before.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Through Study.

These early pioneers were not only men of great prayer, but also students of the Word of God. A part of almost every meeting was devoted to the study of a section of the Sunday School lesson. The commandments and the different articles of the Apostles' Creed were studied in the light of the Bible and their application to the lives of the children.<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Through Business.

As the Sunday School grew, difficult problems developed. In what ways were the disciplinary problems to be settled? What was to be done with those pupils who could not keep up with the class? Should the large class be divided? Should the English language be introduced? Should there be special church services for the children?

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1. Cf. Secretary's Note Book October 8, 1907.
2. Cf. Ibid. 1904-1913.

How could the pupils be encouraged to learn their lessons and attend the sessions faithfully? Was there a better way of taking care of attendance? Some of these questions were answered casually, and others were discussed in great detail.<sup>1.</sup>

a. In Regard to the Curriculum.

After a few years of teaching, it became evident that some schedule had to be planned for the teachers, so that the pupils might be learning something new each year. In 1904, the pastor worked out a plan which proved to be very helpful, and was in use for a long time. This plan was not altogether satisfactory, but very little was done until 1913 when a new text book was considered and introduced. This was the "Graded Lessons on Sverdrup's Explanation with Vogt's Bible History", published by the Augsburg Publishing House.

b. In Regard to the Use of the English Language.

The church had been organized for Norwegians in America. That language, naturally, was used from the beginning. When the children grew up, they used the English language in Public School and elsewhere. Then arose the question, should the English language be introduced into

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1. Cf. Secretary's Note Book 1904 - 1913.

the Sunday School? This question was seriously considered in 1908.<sup>1</sup> It was finally decided to have a few English classes. In 1911, English song books were introduced.<sup>2</sup> For a great many years half the opening and closing exercises were in Norwegian and the other half were in English.<sup>2</sup>

c. In Regard to Attendance.

Something had to be done with the attendance of the pupils. On April 28, 1908, it was suggested that prizes be given to those children who learned their lessons faithfully and attended Sunday School regularly. For two years this system was tried and other systems were studied. In March 1910, the "Crown and Cross" pin system was introduced as a substitute for the prizes.<sup>3</sup>

The attendance increased so rapidly that it was difficult to keep accurate records of all the pupils. In October 1913, a new system of record cards was introduced.<sup>4</sup>

B. A More Rapid Growth through Various Agencies.

1. The Appointment of an Executive Secretary.

a. Records.

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1. Cf. Secretary's Note Book February 1908.
2. Cf. Ibid. September 1911.
3. Cf. Ibid. March 1910.
4. Cf. Ibid. October 1913.

The introduction of this new record system brought with it the need of appointing certain men to take charge of this phase of the work. The school was very fortunate in having in their midst a man whose every effort was centered in the improvement of the Sunday School. He took hold of this new system and has been working at it ever since.<sup>1</sup> This revision of the records has proved to be of no small importance to the Church School.

#### b. Visitation Campaigns.

One thing leads to another. The records were filed alphabetically and geographically. Through this work a keen interest was created in the sources from which the children were drawn. After some investigation, it became evident that there were a great many children who did not attend any Church School. In 1923 a visitation campaign was held. Members and friends of the church went out in twos, making a thorough canvas of the whole section within approximately a two mile radius of the church. Through these efforts, about four hundred children joined the Sunday School, bringing the enrollement over the one thousand mark. Two years later another visitation campaign was made over the same area. This time two hundred children entered the church school. After that, no more visitation campaigns could be conducted until more space was supplied.

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1. Interview with H. W. -- November, 1930.

## 2. The Conducting of a Teacher Training Class.

For several years prior to 1913, a small group of girls, who had been drafted from the Bible Class into teaching, met on Sunday evenings to study the next Sunday's lesson, to talk over their difficulties, and to read various books on Sunday School teaching.

At about this time, the Pastor of the church discovered Hurlbut's "Preparation for Teaching" and asked the teacher of this small group to lead a hand-picked group of thirty-one young people in the studying of this course. In the Fall of 1913, the formal Teacher Training Class was started. The course lasted two years, including reviews, written examinations and special emphasis on certain sections of Hurlbut's book. On July 4, 1915, fifteen students were graduated.

The next class, 1915 - 1917, was affiliated with the New York State Sunday School Association and received its ratings and certificates from Albany.

By 1920, there were so many trained teachers that the Teacher Training Class was changed into a Bible Class whose members studied the Life of Christ for two years before they entered the Teacher Training Course. On April 25, 1926 the last Teacher Training class was graduated.

During these years, seventy-seven men and women had graduated with exceptionally high honors. Albany headquarters had several times commented in praise of the examination papers submitted by the classes and in

1924 they informed the church that Trinity Church Training Class ranked highest in the state.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Organization of a Week-Day Bible School.

In 1925, a new movement was started. In cooperation with several other churches in South Brooklyn, a Bible School was organized. Different books of the Bible were taught by teachers who were specialists in their fields. A Teacher Training Class, which continued several years, was organized in connection with this school.

### 4. The Development of a "Junior Congregation".

For several years, the leaders of Trinity Church had realized that something definite had to be done to keep the young people, between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, especially, in touch with the church. Hence, in the Fall of 1928, the "Junior Congregation" was organized. It consisted of Bible Classes which met for a half an hour for study at nine-thirty Sunday mornings. Immediately after this period of study, the young people gathered for a three-quarters of an hour worship service while the teachers gathered for a discussion of the problems which arose in their teaching.<sup>2</sup>

### 5. Two Weeks of Daily Vacation Bible School.

In the summer of 1929, a Daily Vacation Bible School

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1. Cf. Letter from Dr. B.A.F., the teacher of this Training Class -- March 1931.

2. Cf. "A Junior Congregation" in Trinity Call Sept. 23, 1928.

was conducted for a period of two weeks. It consisted of a Voluntary Staff of teachers who were called at the very last minute and given great liberty in the selection of a curriculum. The whole project was an experiment, which revealed the great possibilities of a well-planned Daily Vacation Bible School for Trinity Church.

### III. A SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL.

Trinity Church School has had an unusually successful history, from its beginning with an enrollment of ten pupils and three teachers to its present enrollment of two thousand and sixty, including pupils, teachers, staff, and cradle roll. Its growth has largely been due to consecrated workers, who have done their part under the direction of enthusiastic leaders. Through all this development, as has been evident in our review, many problems have arisen, some of which to this day are challenging us to find a solution. These problems will constitute the heart of our study.

## CHAPTER II.

### A SURVEY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS IN TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL AT THE BEGINNING OF REORGANIZATION.



## CHAPTER II.

A SURVEY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS IN TRINITY CHURCH  
SCHOOL AT THE BEGINNING OF REORGANIZATION.I. THE PRESENT EQUIPMENT OF TRINITY CHURCH  
SCHOOL.

## A. Buildings.

The photograph (Figure 1) and the three floor plans (Figures 2, 3, 4,) which follow give a fairly representative idea of the existing conditions in the building equipment of Trinity Church. All the space available is used by the church school.

On the ground floor, there is a fairly large auditorium with a seating capacity of five hundred; a library; a kitchen; a pantry; a large storage room; and toilets.

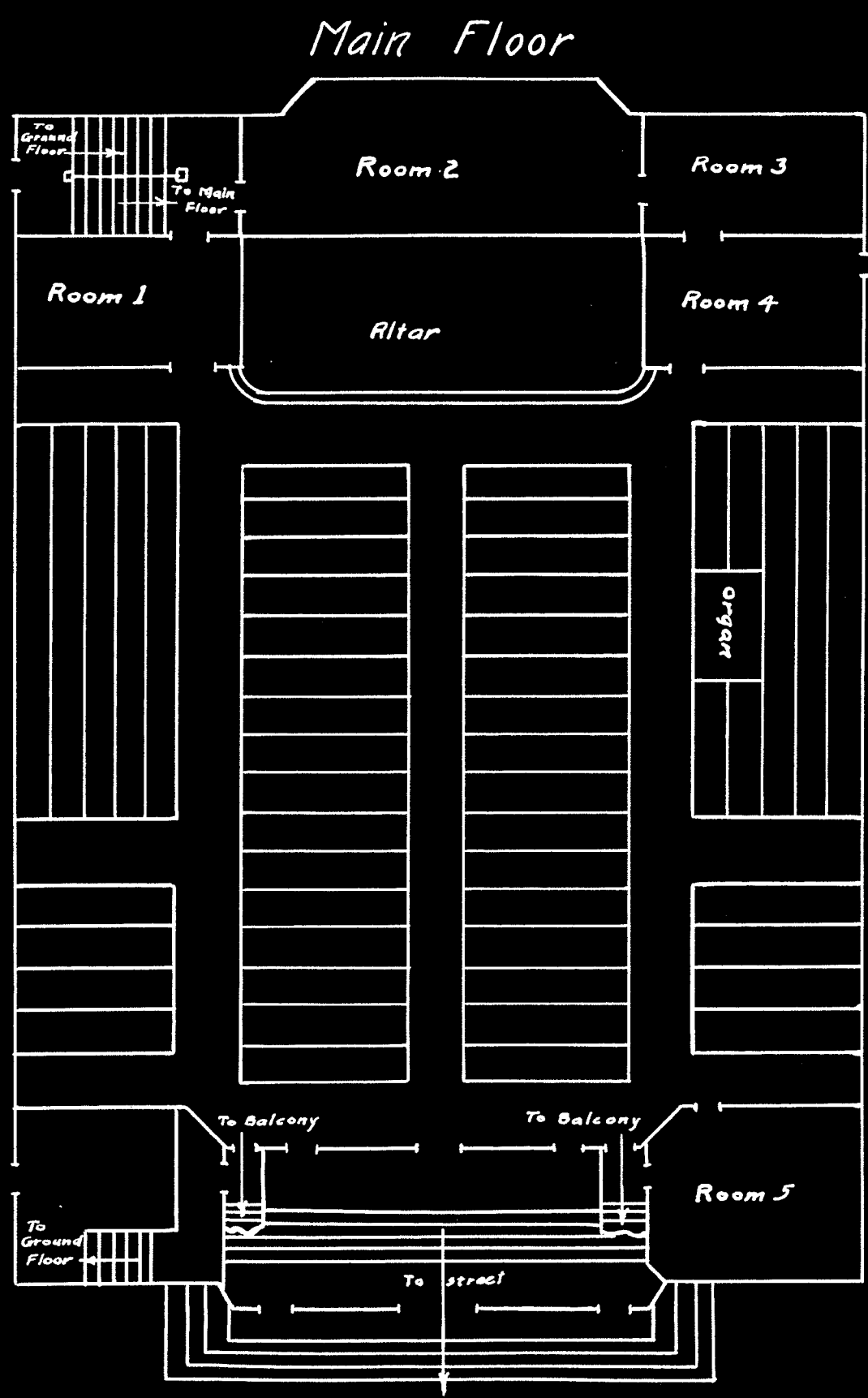
On the main floor, there is a church auditorium with a seating capacity of five hundred twenty; a fairly large beginners' room; and four other classrooms.

The balcony has a seating capacity of one hundred eighty. On the same level as the balcony there is the entrance to the Tower Office which consists of two rooms, one on top of the other.

In addition to its own church building, Trinity Church School uses the building of a near-by Church for



FIGURE 1.



*Fig. 2*

# Balcony

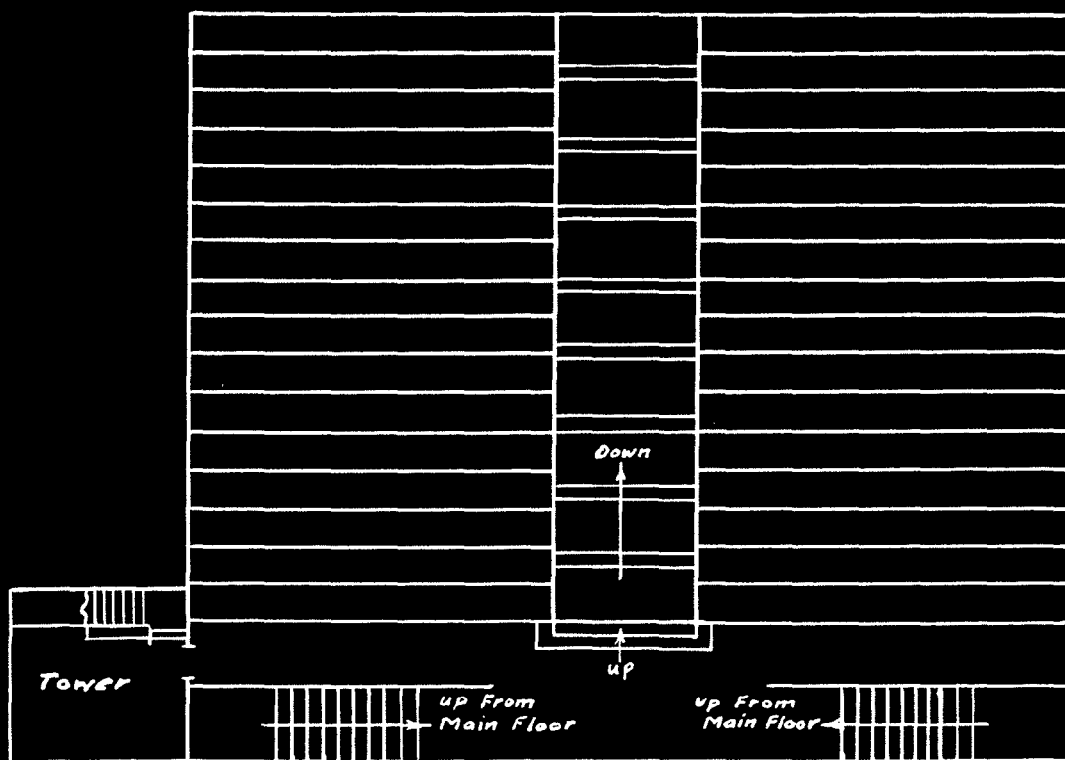


Fig. 3

## Ground Floor

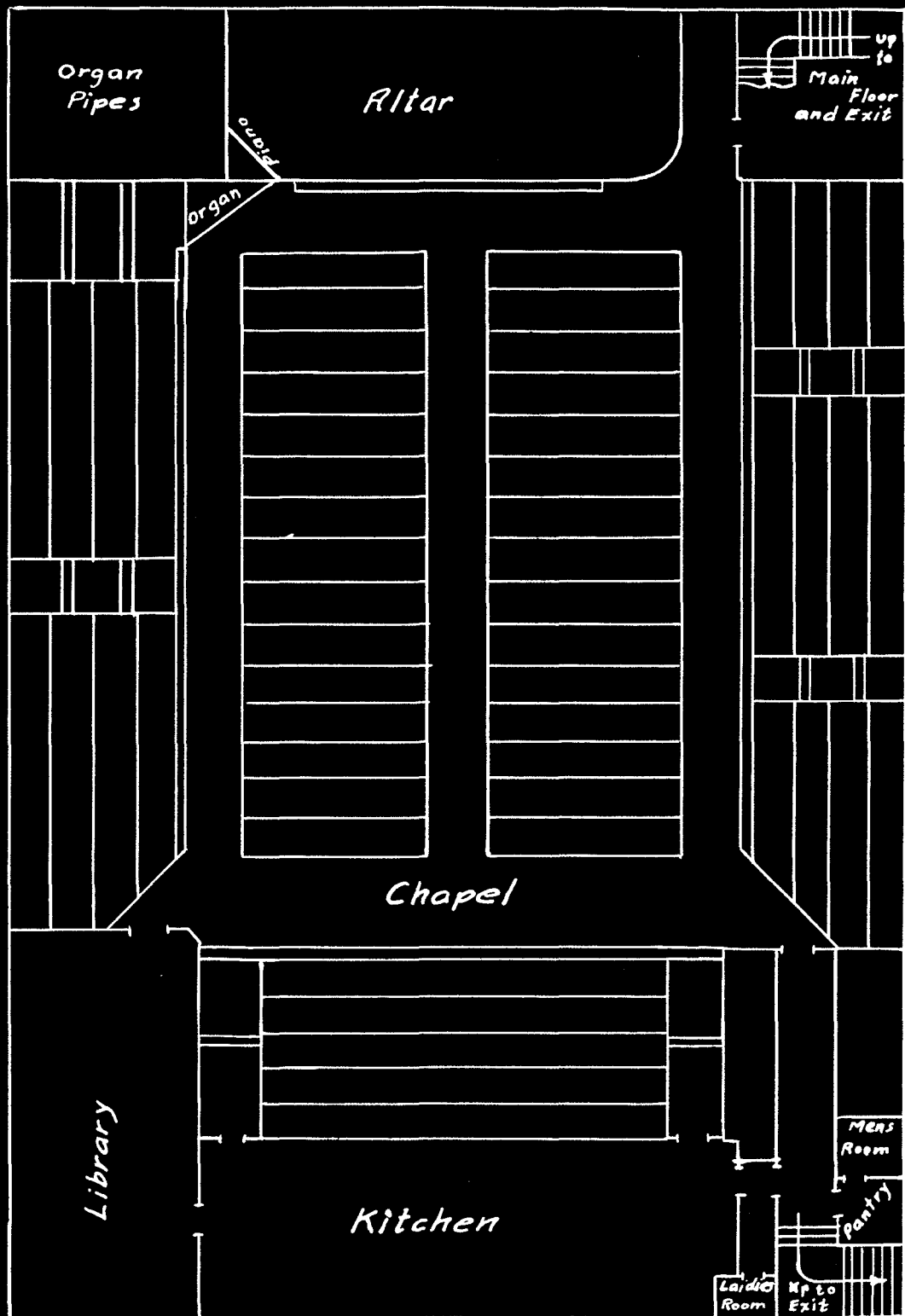


Fig. 4

# Main Floor

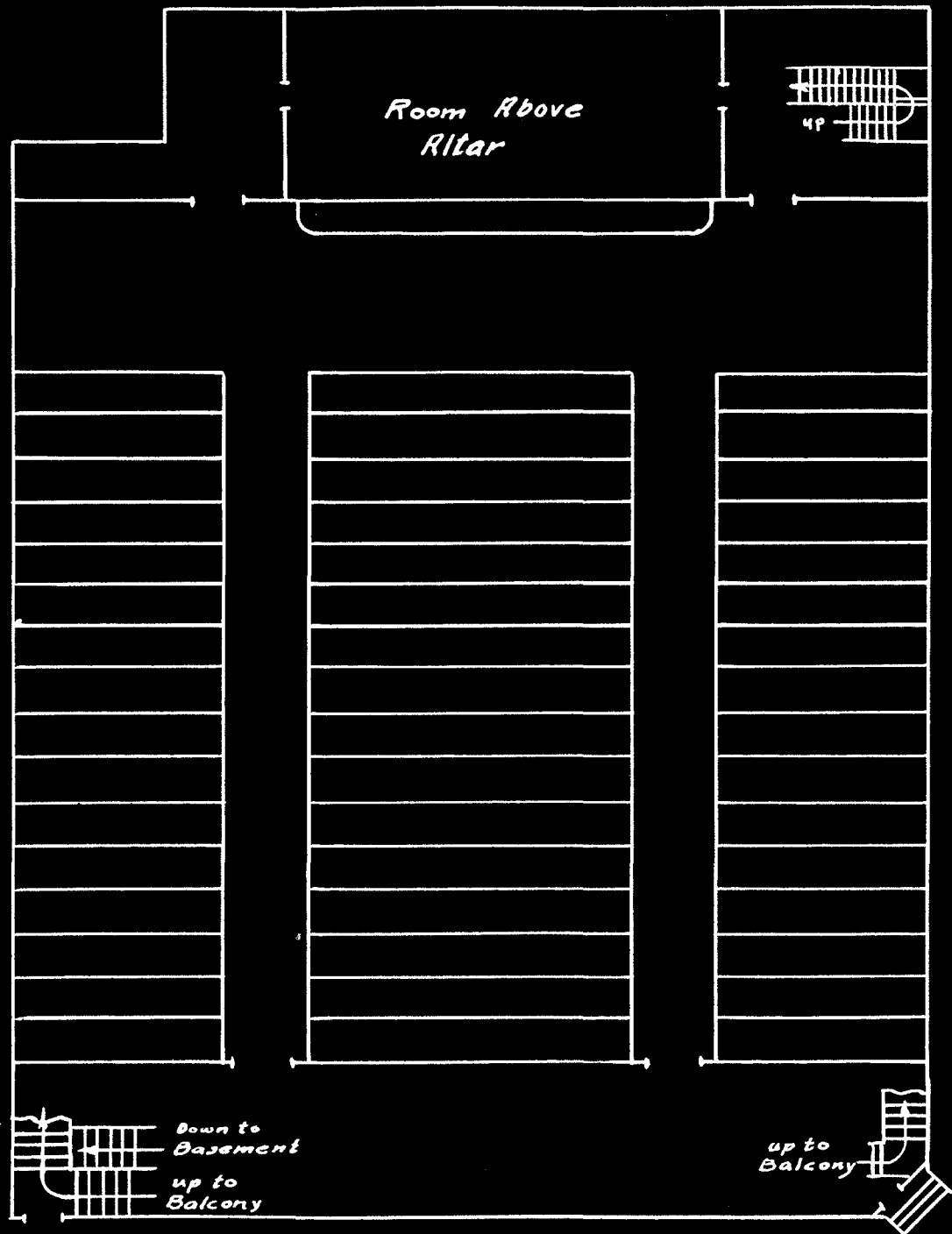
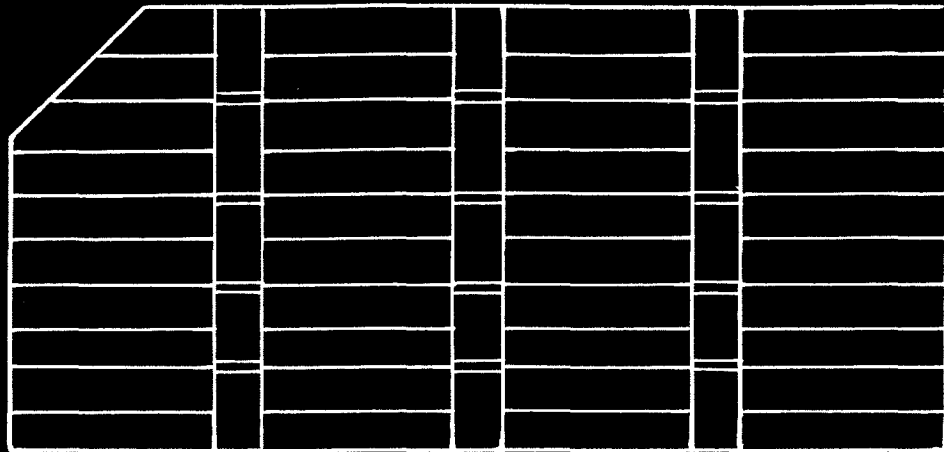
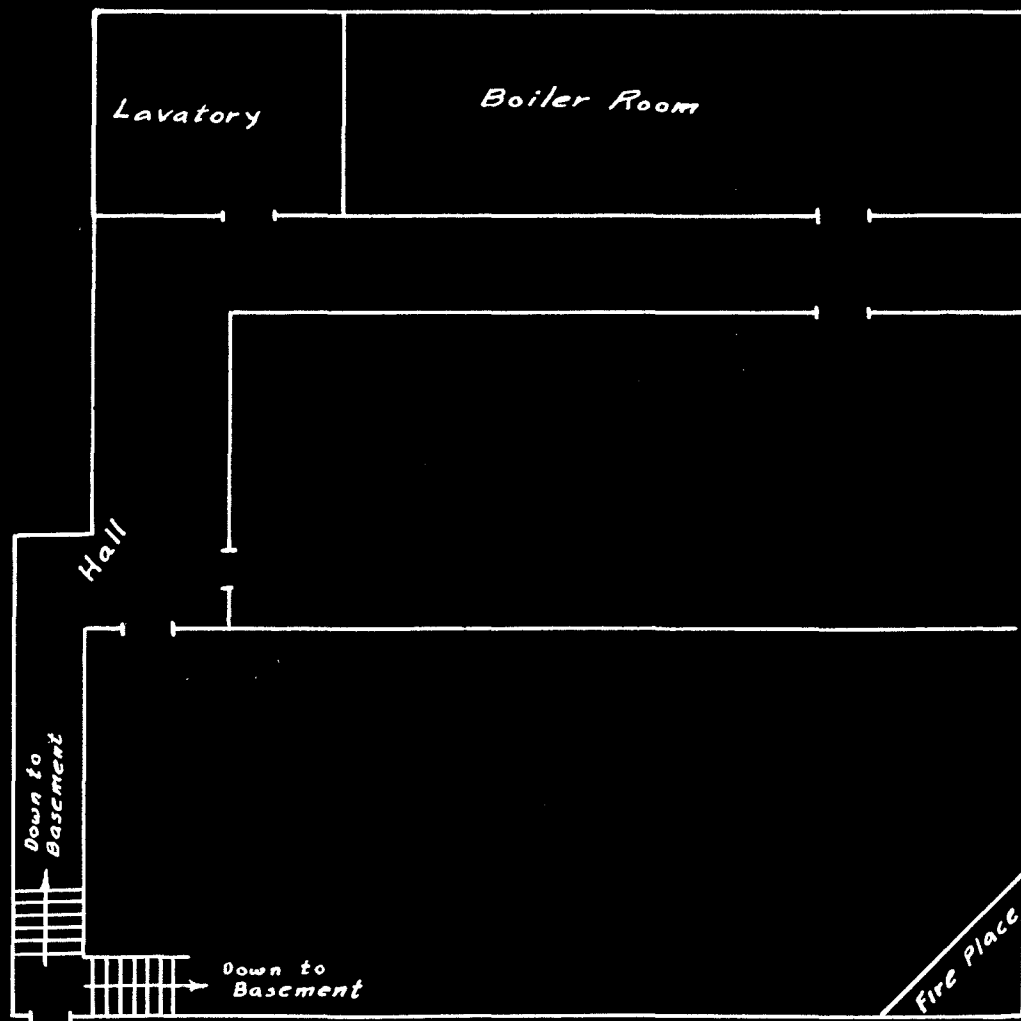


Fig. 5

*Balcony**Fig. 7**Basement**Fig. 6.*

its Intermediate Department and its two adult classes.  
(Figures 5, 6. 7.)

## B. Supplies.

Due to the crowded conditions and also to the teaching method, which is largely of the lecture and the question and answer type, very little attention has been paid upon teaching aids. The present supplies of Trinity Church School are:

1. A black board.
2. Maps.
  - a. A world map.
  - b. Map of the Orient.
  - c. Map of Paul's journeys.
3. Banners for one hundred per cent attendance.
4. The Crown and Cross pin system.
5. Chairs for the Beginners.
6. A screen.
7. Bells for the different departments.
8. A splendid filing system with records of the children and teachers alphabetically and geographically arranged.

## C. The Library.

The library of Trinity Church has been greatly improved by the Trinity young people. It is the most pleasantly furnished room in the church building. The windows



are curtained with green theatrical gauze. On the walls are two maps, a picture of the head of Christ from Hoffman's, "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler", and a small picture of "Christ and the Children of the World". The furniture consists of a library table, some comfortable chairs, and two book-cases. The following books are on the Religious Education shelf:

Barclay, W.C.	"First Standard Manual of Teacher Training"
Brumbaugh, M.G.	"The Making of a Teacher"
Browne, L.	"The Graphic Bible"
Bryant, S.C.	"How to tell Stories to Children"
Collett, S.	"All about the Bible"
Cambridge Bible, The	
St. John	
St. Luke	2 copies
St. Mark	2 copies
St. Matthew	2 copies
Forbush, W.B.	"Child Study and Child Training"
	2 copies
Haldeman, I.M.	"How to Study the Bible"
Hervey, W.T.	"Picture Work"
McKinney, A.H.	"The Sunday School Teacher at His Best"
Morgan, G.C.	"The English Bible"
Norlie, O.G.	"Christian Psychology"
Oliver, Charles	"Preparation for Teaching"
Sheatsley, J.	"To My Sunday School Teachers"
Sheatley, J.	"A Guide to the Study of the Bible"
Sherman,	"Studies in the Life of Christ"
Smith, A.H.	"The Lutheran Church and Child Nurture"
Smyth, J.P.	"The Ancient Documents and the Modern Bible"
	"How We got our Bible"
Stevens & Burton	"A Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study"
Torrey, R.A.	"What the Bible Teaches"
Waterhouse,	"The Gospel Story of Jesus"
Weigle, L.A.	"Pupil and Teacher" Book II

#### D. The Museum.

A very fine collection of articles from the various

mission fields, especially from China, have been received by the church. These articles are displayed in cases which are in the tower lobby of the church building. This museum is never used.

## II. THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION OF TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL.

### A. Clerical Staff.

The keeping of accurate records in itself, is no mean task. In a church school, like that of Trinity, then, with an enrollment of more than eighteen hundred children, it becomes a colossal undertaking. This part of the work, however, as has already been indicated, is very efficiently done through a capable clerical staff.

#### 1. The Executive Secretary.

The Executive Secretary has risen from the apparently insignificant "job" of taking care of the attendance records to his present high position. This involves responsibility for all the administrative work of Trinity Church School, with the exception of the administration of certain details which are in the hands of the superintendents of the different departments. An active interest in the administrative side of the work has increased his many responsibilities which now involve:

a. The organization of the clerical staff to take charge of the enrollment of new pupils, the dismissal of old pupils, the collection of offering envelopes, the

keeping of attendance records, the checking up of absentees, the encouraging of regular attendance through banners and pins, the delivering of Sunday School papers, and the sale of Sunday School text books.

b. The study of existing conditions in order to make the most of the available space in the church building, to determine the size of each class and department, and to place the teachers where they are able to do the best piece of work.

c. The recruiting of new teachers and clerical workers.

d. The arranging of a yearly social for all the church school workers.

e. The presentation of an annual report of the Church School enrollment at the annual congregational meeting.

## 2. The Treasurer

The treasurer's work, which is not very closely connected with the executive secretary and his staff, consists in keeping an account of the money received through collections, offerings, and donations to the Building Fund, in paying all the bills of the Church School, and in keeping an accurate record of all the expenditures.

## B. The Various Departments.

Trinity Church has been divided into seven departments on the basis of the age of the pupils and the size of the rooms in which the different groups meet.

# 1. The Cradle Roll Department.

The cradle roll department consists of five hundred eighty-three children, under three years of age, who have been baptized in the church or enrolled in the Church School. The work of the department is in the hands of a secretary who sends birthday cards to all these children. Through the contact, it is hoped that the parents will be brought in contact with the Church School.

# 2. The Beginners' Department.

## a. Equipment.

The Beginners' Department meets in a room, 35 feet by 15 feet,<sup>1</sup> which has two flimsy-curtained windows, facing a dark court. On its light green walls are half a dozen inappropriate pictures and a clock which never goes. The furnishings consist of a piano, a table, forty small chairs and a great many large chairs which are rather carelessly pushed to the back of the room, when they are not being used by the children.

## b. Organization.

This department consists of an enrollment of one hundred twenty-five children, but an actual attendance of approximately seventy children, who are under six and over three years of age, and three teachers, a class

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1. See Figure 2 - Room 2

teacher who is responsible for the lesson material, an assistant who is in charge of the singing, and a pianist. These three cooperate in conducting the session, greeting the children, helping them with their wraps, taking attendance, collecting the offering envelopes, and handing out cards and papers.

### c. Curriculum.

The lack of adequate space and a sufficient number of teachers to take charge of the children makes it very difficult to carry out any kind of an effective program. More than half the hour is spent in the purely routine work mentioned above. Whatever time is left is devoted to singing, a story illustrating the lesson material which is taken from "The Sunday School Superintendent," edited by Harris, Jones and Company. The following lesson outline, which has been selected from the pamphlet is typical of the "lesson helps" contained throughout.

"JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM AS KING  
 May 17, 1931. Lesson VII  
 Lesson: Luke 19:28-20:47  
 Golden Text: He is Lord of lords, and King of kings.  
 Revelation 17:14  
 Devotional Reading: Psalm 24  
 Intermediate and Senior Topic: Loyalty to the King.  
 Topic for Young People and Adults:  
 The Supremacy of Jesus.

### TO HELP THE TEACHER.

Under this heading, poems and other inspirational and instructional selections are given to aid the teacher in preparing her lesson.

### THE LESSON STORY

The following opening and closing paragraphs illustrate the style used in retelling the Bible story.

'It was at the time of the feast of the Passover and the city of Jerusalem was crowded with people. The wise men as well as many of these people, were talking of the wonderful things which Jesus had done. He had made a man who had been dead three days live again. And now these people were anxious to know if Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

'More and more people joined the procession and as they came near to Jerusalem they were met by many who had come from the city, for the news had gone ahead, and they knew that He who had raised the dead man was on his way to the Passover feast. And as Jesus entered Jerusalem he was treated as their King! <sup>1.</sup>

### 3. The Primary-Age Group.

#### a. Equipment.

Two small, poorly equipped rooms are used by the first year primary group which has thirty-four boys in one room<sup>2.</sup> and fifty-two girls in the other room<sup>3.</sup> There is nothing particularly attractive about these rooms. All that the furnishings consist of is a piano and as many small chairs as can be crowded into the room. There are approximately thirty-five chairs in each room.

The second and third year primary group, consisting of one hundred fifty-four children and sixteen teachers, meets in the church auditorium with the Junior-age classes. This equipment will be described in connection with the Junior-age group.

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1. The Sunday School Superintendent, April, May, June 1931, Page 10.
  2. See Figure 2 - Room 3.
  3. See Figure 2 - Room 5

b. Organization.

There is, then, no separate departmental organization of the primary-age group. There is, therefore, no primary superintendent. The two first year classes each have a class teacher and a pianist who work out their own programs.

The second and third year primary group is divided into sixteen classes with from four to twelve children in each class. These classes, with the junior classes, are under the direction of one superintendent.

c. Curriculum.

The first year primary group is conducted in the very same way as the Beginners' Class. The same songs are learned and the same stories told, as suggested in "The Sunday School Superintendent." The sample lesson given above applies here also.

The other primary children use the Graded Lessons which are edited by the Augsburg Publishing House. These texts consist of fifty lessons on Bible History, arranged chronologically. In the first course, they have the New Testament stories and in the second course, they have the Old Testament stories. With each lesson, there is a Golden Text, a Memory Verse, a Bible Story, and a picture to accompany the lesson, as in the following sample, selected from the "Graded Lessons' System," Primary - Grade II.

"GOD MADE ALL THINGS.

Golden Text.

God saw everything that he had made, and,  
behold, it was very good. Gen. 1,31.

## Memory Verse.

He built the earth, He spread the sky,  
 And fixed the starry lights on high;  
 Wonders of grace to God belong;  
 Repeat His mercies in your song.  
 (L.H. 28, v.3.)

Long ago God made the world. It did not look then as it does now. There were no people, no animals, no trees and flowers; there was no sun, nor moon, nor stars, - all was darkness.

Then God said: "Let there be light," and the light came. After that, God made the sky, the seas, the rivers, and the dry land.

He made trees and grass and flowers to grow out of the earth.

He made fishes and other animals that live in the water, and the birds that live in the air.

He also made the animals that live on the land, such as the horse, the cow, the cat, the dog, and all other animals, large and small.

After God had made the world, - the sky, the land and water, the trees and flowers, the sun, moon, and stars, the fishes and birds and all animals that live on the earth - after He had made all of these, He made man.

The first man that God made was Adam, and the first woman was Eve.

They lived in a beautiful garden that God had made for them. This garden was called Eden. Gen.1.

1. Name some of the things you saw on your way to church today.
2. Who made all these things?
3. Name some other things that God made.
4. When all was darkness, God made the light. How did He make it?
5. God made the light before He made the animals and plants. Why?
6. What were the names of the first people that God made?
7. Where did they live?" 1

## 4. The Junior-Age Group.

## a. Equipment.

The junior-age group, which consists of an enrollment of three hundred forty-six children and forty nine teachers, shares, as stated above, the church auditorium

1. Graded Lessons' System, Old Testament Bible Stories  
 Primary - Grade II, page 8,9.



with the second and third year primary group.<sup>1</sup> These classes are crowded into the pews as close together as they can possibly get. All the place available is used for classes, including the platform, 35 feet by 15 feet, where seven classes meet. Naturally, there is no privacy or special equipment whatever.

b. Organization.

This group of primary and junior children, consisting of more than five hundred, is under the leadership of a superintendent, two assistants, an organist, a pianist, and sixty-five teachers.

1. The Superintendent.

The superintendent of this division has been with the church school from its very earliest days and has held this office for twenty-seven years. He is a devoted Christian whose main interest is bringing the children into a living relationship with God. Through many years of service, he has seen the Sunday school prosper along the old familiar lines so that he is naturally very hesitant about making changes. His duties, on the whole, are rather difficult to define. Every Sunday he is on the platform ready to tell a story if the need arises. The singing, the scripture reading, and the prayer are all conducted by the assistants. During the lesson period, he goes from class to class, shaking hands with the teachers and saying "Good morning" to the boys and girls. The real source

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1. See Figure 2.

of his influences is in his prayer life.

## 2. The Teachers.

The teachers represent almost all walks of life and all ages. There are some who have been trained in Norway where they have received a thorough religious training in the "Folke-skole." There are those who have been brought up in this country with very little religious instruction, either in school or in the homes. Some have had the Teacher Training courses, but a great many have had no training in methods or in Bible study. The teachers are chosen largely on the basis of their spiritual life, which radiates through their teaching in a deep sincerity and earnestness of purposes.

## c. Curriculum.

### 1. Worship.

This division of Trinity Church School still has its "opening and closing exercises" with its announcements and remarks by the superintendent, "its singing of songs, praying of prayers, reading of Scripture and more singing of songs." <sup>1</sup>

On special occasions, such as Easter and Christmas, a real worship period is conducted. These programs with their hymns, scripture reading, talks, prayers and offerings are so planned that "there is an outreaching of self toward God."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Powell, Marie C. "Junior Method in the Church School" page 170.
2. Ibid. page 171.

## 2. Instruction.

The lesson period is devoted to the study of the lessons selected from the "Graded Lessons' System, Catechism Part III. - Grade V." These lessons consist of a series of catechetical questions on the different commandments, on the various articles of the Apostles Creed, on the petition of the Lord's prayer and on the two sacraments. In addition, there are some Bible stories which are used to illustrate the lesson brought out in the Catechism.

The children are supposed to memorize the catechism and be able to tell the Bible story. The teacher is present to hear their lessons, to explain the difficult parts and to exhort the pupils to apply these lessons to their lives. These lessons, as planned, follow, without variation, a stereotype outline. The following selection is a typical illustration.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM.

What does such baptizing with water signify? It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires; and again a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul says in Romans, the sixth chapter: We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death; that like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

### Bible Text.

1 Peter 3:21.-The like figure even Baptism saves us not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

PAUL

Saul went to Damascus to seize all Christians and

to bring them to Jerusalem. When he drew nigh unto Damascus, there suddenly shone around about him a light from heaven. He fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It will be hard for thee to kick against the goad! Saul asked: What wilt Thou, Lord, that I should do? The Lord answered: Arise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. Saul rose up; he was blind, and had to be led by the hand.

There was in Damascus a Christian by name Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision: Go to Saul that he may receive his sight, for I have chosen him to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. And Ananias went, and laid his hands upon him. And straightway there fell as it were scales from his eyes, and he received his sight and was baptized. His name now became Paul and he proclaimed Jesus, that He is the Son of God.

#### Questions

The following illustrate the type of questions used.

1. Who is the Saul mentioned in our Golden Text?
2. When Saul repented, whom did God send to comfort him?
5. What great change took place in Saul after he was baptized.
7. Why does Baptism bring a "good conscience"? Our sins are washed away.
13. What is meant by "buried with Christ"? Our old Adam is to die and be buried in Baptism.
15. How is this expressed in the Memory Verse?

#### Notes and Suggestions.

A series of suggestions are given to aid the teacher in preparation of the lesson.

#### Golden Text.

Acts 9:4.-Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It will be hard for you to kick against the pricks.

#### Memory Verse.

With one accord, O God, we pray:  
Grant us to grow in grace each day  
By Holy Baptism that we may  
Eternal life inherit.

(L.H. 141, v.2)<sup>1</sup>

## 5. The Intermediate Department.

### a. Equipment.

Due to the lack of space, the Intermediate Department has to meet in a neighboring church building<sup>1</sup> which is ten blocks away from the Trinity Church building. Thus, the Intermediate Department has more room. Several of the classes meet in separate rooms and the classes which meet in the large auditorium are not as closely crowded together as they are in the other departments.

### b. Organization.

The Intermediate Department, which consists of two hundred thirty-one children, has a superintendent, a pianist and twenty-six teachers in its organization.

#### (1) The Superintendent.

The superintendent of this department is a young man who is willing to listen to suggestions, to consider them and even to try them if he is convinced that there is real value in making the change. His duties consist of taking care of the "opening and closing exercises" and being responsible for the conduct of the department which meets in this church building.

#### (2) The Teachers.

The teachers of this department are on the whole very much like those described under the Junior Department. The more trained and experienced teachers, however, are given the older classes so that there are fewer young people

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1. See Figure 5.

among this group of teachers.

c. Curriculum.

(1) Worship.

With the exception of the selection of hymns and of scripture reading, the "opening and closing exercises" of this department are exactly like those described under the junior-age group.

(2) Instruction.

Even the lesson material varies but little from that of the juniors. The same series of text books are used. The lessons are very much alike from grade to grade. The only difference is in the increased difficulty of the more advanced lessons, as may be noted from the following illustration selected from "Graded Lessons on Sverdrup's Explanation, Part 11. - Grade VII."

"The Second Article (2). Christ's Offices.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

1. Wherewith has Christ redeemed us? (166)

He has paid for our sins with his holy, precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death, and has fulfilled the Law in our stead with His Holy life and perfect obedience.

1 Pet. 1:18-19. Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation; but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

2. Whom has Christ redeemed? (167)

Me, a poor, lost and condemned creature.

3. Has not Christ redeemed all men? (168)

Yes; Christ Jesus gave his life a ransom for all. 1 Tim. 2:6.

1 John 2:2. He is the propitiation, for our sins; and not for ours only (namely the sins of believers) but also for the sins of the whole world.

4. But are not many lost whom Christ has redeemed

Yes, certainly; because they reject Him in impenitence and unbelief.

2 Pet. 2:1. They deny the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

John 3:18. He that believe not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

5. Who become partakers of Christ's redemption?  
(170)

They who repent and believe in Him.

Jesus in Gethsemane.

After Jesus had eaten the last Passover and instituted the Lord's Supper, He went with the eleven disciples to the garden of Gethsemane.

And He took with Him, Peter, James, and John further into the garden, and said to them: Abide here, and watch with me! And he went away as far as a stone's cast, fell upon His face, and said: My Father, if it be possible, then take this cup from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt!

And He came to the three disciples and found them sleeping. Then He said unto Peter: Could ye not watch one hour with me? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation! Again He went away, and prayed the same prayer, and thus three times, and being in agony of death His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling on the ground. And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. Matt. 26.

Christ the King.

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possessions.

Be wise now therefore, ye kings. Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Ps. 2.<sup>1</sup>

## 6. The Senior Department.

### a. Equipment.

The entire ground floor of Trinity Church building

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1. Graded Lessons on Sverdrup's Explanation Part 11. - Grade VII  
Pages 48-49.

is set aside for the Senior Department, which is more popularly known as the "Junior Congregation." This, as is shown in the floor plan, consists of the chapel, library, and the kitchen. All of these are used for classes. During the lesson period, the movable chairs, in the central part of the chapel, are arranged in small squares so that the pupils of each class face each other.

b. Organization.

The Senior Department, which consists of three hundred seventy-three young people, from fourteen to eighteen years of age, has been organized into a Junior Congregation under the leadership of the Young Peoples' Director. All the activities of the group have been worked out into a coordinated program for young people. Through a "Junior Board," which is composed of a representative from each class, plans are made for the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical phases of the program. This department has its own mid-week service, social service groups, athletic group, choir, Young Peoples' paper, etc. The director of this Junior Congregation is assisted by an organist and a choir leader.

(1) The Young People's Director.

The Young People's director is an unusually talented young man who is studying for his Doctor's degree and working in the church on a part-time basis. In his six years' experience with the young people of Trinity church, he has demonstrated real qualities of leadership and has shown himself able to rally the young people to Christian service. Results are due, not only to his natural abilities, but also to his training, for he has made a thorough study



of the adolescent boy and girl, and of effective adolescent methods.

(2) The Teachers.

The forty-one teachers of this department have been chosen with the greatest care in regard to their Christian life and their ability to teach. While the young people are having their worship service, these teachers meet in three different groups, under specially trained leadership to discuss the problems which have arisen in their groups, and in connection with the lesson for the following Sunday.

C. Curriculum.

(1) Worship.

After a half an hour of instruction, the "Junior Congregation" meets for a regular worship service which lasts for about forty minutes. This is in charge of the director, who is assisted only by the organist and choir leader, the teachers, as just stated, having their discussion groups at this time. At ten o'clock a chinese gong is sounded and an organ prelude is played, while the classes assemble for worship. After all the teachers have left for their respective groups and the young people are seated, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple" is sung quietly and reverently. From this point, the service is conducted in regular church form, including hymns, scripture reading, Apostles' Creed, selection by Junior Choir, sermon, offering, announcements and the Benediction.

(2) Instruction.

One might almost describe the instructional work in the "Junior Congregation" as a three year course in Bible Study.

First Year Old Testament Background.

Text - Grade VIII-The Augsburg Series.

Second Year The Life of Christ.

Text - The Life and Times of Jesus by Grant.

Third Year The Book of Acts.

Text - The Life of Paul-The Augsburg Series.

This work is done largely through the discussion method based upon the textbook and the Bible.

7. Adult Classes.

a. The Women's Bible Class.

The pastor's wife is in charge of a small group of women over eighteen years of age, who meet in the neighboring church building for an hour to study the Gospel of Luke. This class has no organization.

b. The Men's Bible Class.

A group of young men also meet in this same building for an hour's study on one of the New Testament books. The members of this class are too old for the "Junior Congregation" and are not particularly interested in teaching, but are anxious to go on with their Bible study. One of the consecrated laymen has, therefore, taken it upon himself to lead this group.

## III. SUMMARY.

We now have before us conditions as they exist in Trinity Church School at the time when this reorganization was undertaken. Having reviewed the equipment, the organization, and the various curricula being used, we shall now proceed to make a diagnosis on the basis of this study of the needs of Trinity Church School.

## CHAPTER 111

A DIAGNOSIS OF THE NEEDS OF TRINITY CHURCH  
SCHOOL AS REVEALED BY THIS SURVEY OF EXIST-  
ING CONDITIONS.

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ING CONDITIONS.

As we approach our task of determining what, in view of the circumstances, the needs of Trinity Church are, we shall use as a basis for our judgment the now generally accepted standards of modern religious education. Keeping these in mind, we see from the survey in the preceding chapter that the development of Trinity Church School is seriously handicapped. There is a lack of adequate room. There is no modern teaching equipment. The departments are poorly organized. The present curriculum is far from effective. Many changes, as will be indicated by the needs listed in this chapter, should be introduced as soon as possible.

1. NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL IN REGARD TO EQUIP-  
MENT.

## A. Buildings.

For the efficient management and training of the children in such a large institution, it is absolutely necessary to concentrate all the departments, rather than to have them in two buildings several blocks apart. Trinity Church needs a building large enough to take care of its expanding

work in the field of religious education. To specify what this building should be like would be to go beyond our jurisdiction. Suffice it to say, that it should be carefully planned by capable architects who are familiar with the best in buildings of this type, and should, of course, include adequate facilities for each department. This would, involve, not only individual class rooms, but a larger room for the worship service of each department, as well. Before any action is taken, however, a committee should be selected to make a thorough study of church school buildings, giving special consideration to local needs.

#### B. Supplies.

To accomplish the best results certain teaching aids are necessary. Since these supplies vary according to the age of the children, they will be discussed in connection with the needs of the various departments.

#### C. The Library.

The religious education books in the Trinity Church library need to be circulated among the teachers. To do this work most effectively, a special librarian should be appointed to guide the teachers in the selection of the books, to be in the library before and after the church school sessions in order that she may help in the selection of new books on worship, child study and departmental teaching methods. All these books on religious education should be placed in a separate case.

#### D. The Museum.

Many children go to Trinity Church School for years without learning a single thing about the interesting museum which, we have seen, is in the lower lobby of the church building. The school, as a whole, needs to be introduced to this lost treasure. A custodian, who is interested in the articles and able to interest others should be put in charge of the museum. Then, too, the teachers should be taught to use these articles as illustrations in their lessons and should be permitted to take them to their classes during the church school session.

### 11. NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL IN REGARD TO ORGANIZATIONS.

#### A. Clerical Staff.

Under the leadership of the Executive Secretary, the work of the clerical staff is managed very efficiently. The needs of this department, if there be any, may therefore, for the present be ignored, in view of the far more urgent needs of other departments of the Church School.

#### B. The Various Departments.

##### 1. The Cradle Roll Department.

The Cradle Roll Department of Trinity Church School has a good start, but one person cannot take proper care of such a large enrollment. In order to be effective, certain

improvements are necessary, such as: an accurate record for each child, a greeting for each birthday, regular visitation of the homes by one who is interested and capable of giving suggestions regarding the care and training of the baby, and occasional mothers' meetings.<sup>1</sup> The carrying out of such improvements will necessitate adding at least two additional members to the staff.

## 2. The Beginners' Department.

### a. Equipment.

The outstanding need in the equipment of the Beginners' Department is more room. Until this is provided, the best must be made of existing conditions which could be improved in the following way: removing the large chairs and replacing them by a sufficient number of small chairs to be arranged in a semi-circle; securing racks for clothing and a cabinet for offering plates, birthday boxes, charts, books, and other teaching aids; replacing the flimsy curtains with cheerfully colored curtains; and decorating the walls with a few suitable and well-framed pictures.<sup>2</sup>

### b. Organization.

The work of the Beginners' Department must be so systematized that the most is made of every moment the children are in the church school. To do this work it is necessary that a superintendent be put in charge of the department to help select the other officers and teachers, to carry on the

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1. Cf. Moore, M.A. The Cradle Roll Manual, Chapters 5 and 7  
2. Cf. Danielson, Methods with Beginners' Chapter 11.



duties of administration, to plan the programs, to arrange the teachers' meetings<sup>9</sup>, to keep in contact with the parents of the children, to supervise the teaching, and to conduct the Departmental session.<sup>1</sup> To help her in this work there should be a secretary to enroll the children, to keep records, and to manage all details of a business nature, and several assistants to take charge of the different details involved. "In a department of fifty, there should be therefore five or six assistants."<sup>2</sup> At present, it will be remembered, there are three teachers - no one of them actually superintendent - for one hundred twenty-five children.

#### c. Curriculum.

Something definite must be done in regard to the worship and instructional material. Here, with an Intermediate pamphlet being used as the source of the lessons, there is a great demand for a well-organized curriculum based upon the needs, interests and experiences of the children themselves. Such a curriculum should furnish adequate information through conversations and stories about nature and common human experiences; should develop attitudes, appreciations and ideals essential to Christian character; should teach the children to know and love God; and should furnish a means to express their love through service to others.<sup>3</sup>

#### 3. The Primary-Age Group.

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1. Cf. Baker, E.D. Kindergarten Method in the Church School Chapter XXI.

2. Ibid, page 296

3. Cf. Ibid. Chapter XIX.

## a. Equipment.

Very little can be done in regard to equipment until more adequate building provisions have been made. At present, there is room for nothing more than chairs, pupils and teachers. The congregation certainly needs to learn that "children of the church should be cared for in bright and attractive rooms which are artistically decorated and adequately equipped for their various activities."<sup>1</sup>

## b. Organization.

Although the primary-age group has no separate place in which to meet, it does not naturally follow that this group does not need separate departmental organizations. To have a consecrated and thoroughly trained working force in charge of the primary work would be a great step in the reorganization of the church school. To this end, the six, seven and eight year old children should eventually be brought together and organized as a group, with their own departmental officers and assistants. As yet, however, this is out of the question.

## c. Curriculum.

## (1) Worship.

"The day of the 'Opening Exercise' is past."<sup>2</sup> Children need to be brought into a vital relationship with God through a well-planned and carefully directed worship period, based upon their own interests and experiences and determined by their specific needs.<sup>3</sup>

1. Munkres, A. Primary Method in the Church School page 218.

2. Ibid. page 205.

3. Cf. Ibid. Chapter XVlll.

## (2) Instruction.

Since "no course of instruction prepared for primary children has proved entirely satisfactory"<sup>1</sup> it is very difficult to suggest any definite lesson material. Something definite must be done to change the present curriculum material in Trinity Church School. The teachers should be taught the underlying principles of good lesson material and guided in a search for better material. The first step toward this end is to awaken them to a realization of the inadequacy of the material now in use.

## 4. The Junior-Age Group.

## a. Equipment.

What has been said in regard to the equipment of the primary-age group is equally true in regard to the equipment of this group since both meet in the same place. As has been stated, the church needs to erect a new building especially designed to meet the demands of its work in religious education. In addition to more adequate space, junior teachers need special teaching aids, such as blackboards and maps. Until separate rooms are available, however, little can be done to secure these supplies.

## b. Organization.

If the primary-age group is reorganized with a superintendent in charge of the special activities of that group, the junior-age group should also have a separate organization of its own, including the establishment of a

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1. Munkers, A. Primary Method in the Church School page 29.

junior organization, departmental teachers' meetings and other improvements as the need for them arises.<sup>1</sup>

c. Curriculum.

(1) Worship.

In order to develop a God-consciousness in the hearts and minds of the children, a proper atmosphere must be created. This cannot be done through the present "opening and closing exercises" as well as it can be done through a well-planned "worship service."<sup>2</sup>

(2) Instruction.

The curriculum for juniors should contain not only worship material but also experiences and informational material. It is almost impossible to introduce any expressional material until more adequate building equipment has been provided. A careful study of curriculum material, however, should be made so that a course that will meet the needs of the junior child may be introduced.<sup>3</sup> As may be noted in the lesson material illustrated in the preceding chapter, the present curriculum is not at all adapted to the needs, interests and experiences of the junior child.

5. The Intermediate Department.

a. Equipment.

The mere fact that the Intermediate Department meets in a near-by church building indicates the need for more adequate building equipment. The renting of this building is,

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1. Cf. Powell, M.C. Junior Method in the Church School Chapter XXIII  
 2. Cf. Ibid. Chapters XI-XIII.  
 3. Cf. Ibid. Chapter IV.

however, the best thing that could have been done under the present circumstances, for, as we have seen, the equipment of this department is far more satisfactory than that of the others.

b. Organization,

With the present superintendent in charge, there is no doubt that great improvements will be made in the Intermediate Department whose "organization and program should provide actual life situations of leadership, responsibilities and service to its members."<sup>1</sup> Both the officers and teachers should be shown the great possibilities in the pupil organization of this department.

c. Curriculum.

(1) Worship

The same "opening and closing exercises" which are used in the Primary Department are used in the Intermediate Department. It is of utmost importance that something be done immediately to help train these early adolescents in worship so that they may be ready for the "Junior Congregation."

(2) Instruction.

When the intermediates leave this department, they join the "Confirmation Class" which meets on Saturdays under the guidance of the pastor. In this class, they study catechism intensively. The instruction in this department should prepare them for this work, but it should also give them actual help in everyday living.

"Information will be needed by the pupils in order that they may understand the Christian way of life, develop a proper conception of social obligations and duties, and be trained in the privileges and duties of church membership. Information will be needed in meeting all the other vital problems of everyday living which are suggested by the objectives."<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. The Senior Department.

The Senior Department under the leadership of the Director of Young People is being managed so efficiently that we shall omit it from this consideration of the needs of the Church School.

#### 7. The Adult Classes.

It is very evident, from the small beginnings we noted before, that more adult classes are needed. These classes should be organized and encouraged to continue the work which has been started.

### III. A SUMMARY OF THE NEEDS OF TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL.

The needs of Trinity Church School, as evidenced by the above suggestions, are many. The most outstanding need, we have seen, is more adequate building equipment. Only when this is achieved, can proper reorganization of the various departments, which is sorely needed, be effected. Aside from these two outstanding needs, we note such needs as separate departmental and pupil organization, better curriculum with improvements in worship and instruction, and a more efficient teaching staff.

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To take care of these needs, there should be a Director of Religious Education and a Religious Education Committee composed of such members of the church as are interested in the educational development of the Church School.

With these needs before us we shall now turn to the various steps involved in the process of reorganization.

## **CHAPTER IV**

**A DETAILED REPORT OF THE PROCESS OF REORGANIZATION AS DETERMINED BY THESE NEEDS.**

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## CHAPTER 1V

## A DETAILED REPORT OF THE PROCESS OF REORGANIZATION AS DETERMINED BY THESE NEEDS.

## I THE PRELIMINARY STEPS TAKEN IN THE PROCESS OF REORGANIZATION.

A study of the history and the conditions of Trinity Church School reveals certain steps which have played a part in paving the way for reorganization. We note especially such improvements as the introduction of a new record system, the appointment of an Executive Secretary, and the organization of a "Junior Congregation." All these have served as an incentive to greater improvements and have been used in this present process of reorganization as encouraging examples of what can be done.

Beyond these, however, a certain amount of preliminary work had to be done, before the actual work of reorganization could be launched.

## A. Securing the sanction of the Church Board.

Nothing definite could be begun until the local church board approved the undertaking. Both the Senior Pastor and the Young People's Director presented the matter before this body. After much deliberation, they finally authorized the

Young People's Director, together with an assistant, whom he might choose, to make such improvements as they should deem advisable. In this way, the writer, subsequently chosen as assistant, became partially responsible for planning and carrying out the changes agreed upon.

#### B. Securing the Cooperation of the Church School Staff.

Now that the church board had given permission to proceed, the next thing to be done was to secure the sympathy and cooperation of the church school staff. This was done through a meeting in which the executive secretary and the superintendents were given an opportunity to voice their opinions in answer to this question, "What do you think about the present conditions of our Sunday School?" A free discussion took place in which such problems as habitually late or chronically absent teachers, unprepared and half-hearted teachers, and a generally poor teaching system were suggested and considered.

After the superintendents had expressed themselves, the Young People's Director asked this question, "What do you think can be done to improve these conditions?" Again the superintendents responded freely. They mentioned several ways in which they themselves might help matters, such as calling upon the teachers, speaking to them individually at the Church School, and generally stressing the importance of punctuality and regularity in attendance. Then someone mentioned the possibility of having Teachers' Meetings. This was the suggestion

for which we had hoped and toward which we had worked throughout the evening. After each one present had given his reasons for or against this idea, the Young People's Director presented the plan of having monthly grade conferences under specially trained leaders. As this suggestion was presented at the most opportune moment and in a way that had been carefully thought out before, it was received enthusiastically. More than this, it was suggested by the group that these meetings be started as soon as possible.

To prepare the way for another step in the process of reorganization, a half hour was spent, at the same meeting, in discussing the "Opening and Closing Exercises." Each superintendent was given a copy of Weigle and Tweedy's book, "Training the Devotional Life" with special instruction to read the chapter on "Worship in the Church School."

#### C. Securing the Assistance of an Educational Committee.

With the sanction of the Church Board and the cooperation of the Church School Staff secured, we were now ready for our third preliminary step. Feeling the need of the assistance of some interested church members who had had experience in the field of education, we organized an Educational Committee. The members of this group were to study with us the needs of the church school and to help us with the actual work in this process of reorganization.

## 11. THE ACTUAL WORK DONE IN THE PROCESS OF REORGANIZATION.

### A. With Respect to Equipment.

#### 1. The Church Building.

For many years, the children have been giving their birthday offerings to the "Sunday School Building Fund." Thus far, this is the only progressive step that had been taken to meet this outstanding need. Naturally, this has not gone a very long way toward solving the problems! Last spring, however, before definite arrangements had been made for the use of the neighboring church, there was much talk about building an extension to the present building. This suggestion aroused much comment and caused some of the people to realize the need of more adequate building equipment. This year, all that has been done to help this situation has been to increase this realization through quiet talks with different influential members of the church. It is hoped that thus eventually sufficient interest will have been aroused to lead to definite action.

In the meantime, while the people are being educated, the best must be made of existing conditions. A start toward this has been made in the improvement of the Beginners' Room. The small chairs have been placed in a semi-circle and all the large chairs which are not used at that hour have been taken out of the room and placed elsewhere. The teachers have talked about the decorations of the room and have decided to pass their suggestions on to the "Junior Congregation" who use

this room for their mid-week services. Through these small beginnings people have begun to think about the need for improvements and possible ways of carrying them out.

## 2. The Library.

During the year, a separate book-case has been secured for the Religious Education section of the Church Library. Several books on child study<sup>1</sup> and departmental teaching methods<sup>2</sup> have been added to the library. A librarian has been appointed to be on duty after the Church School session. Indeed, the library has found a real place in the work of the Church School.

## 3. The Museum.

Such is not the case in regard to the Museum, for it takes time to educate people. We have talked about the museum to several leaders of the Church School and have received some very good suggestions. These include such things as placing part of the exhibition in a more frequented part of the church and arranging the exhibition in such an attractive way that it will interest passers-by. A few have thus been made conscious of the great possibilities inherent in the use of the museum, but there is still much to be done before

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### 1. Books on Child Study

- Whitley, M.T. A Study of the Little Child.
- Whitley, M.T. A Study of the Primary Child.
- Whitley, M.T. A Study of the Junior Child.

### 2. Books on Departmental Teaching Methods.

- Baker, E.D. Kindergarten Method in the Church School
- Munkers, A Primary Method in the Church School
- Powell, M.C. Junior Method in the Church School.
- McKibben, F.M. Intermediate Method in the Church School

the museum will play a prominent part in the work of the Church School.

## B. With Respect to Organization.

### 1. The Cradle Roll Department.

Nothing has been done with this department. It has been suggested that three or four women be found to visit the homes of the Cradle Roll members. In all probability, this will be done some time during next year. Then, after the homes have been visited, these women can more definitely suggest further plans for the reorganization of this department.

### 2. The Beginners' Department.

The opportunity to help in this department offered itself one Sunday morning when there happened to be one teacher in charge of sixty-two children. Naturally the assistance of the writer was gladly welcomed, particularly in such things as getting the late comers settled, taking the attendance, and handing out papers and cards. Little by way of actual teaching was done on that day.

The experience provided a fine opportunity to discuss, at the next conference meeting, for this group, the various problems of this department. Since that time, we have been gradually improving matters. For one thing, the star system for early comers has been introduced at the suggestion of the teachers. This, while not altogether ideal, has done wonders in bringing the children to class on time. Then, too, careful consideration has been given to the matter of taking the attendance. It is planned to have one person,

who shall take note of the children as they arrive, in charge of the secretarial work of the department. These monthly conferences, it has been found, have done much to help the teachers realize the importance of a more definite organization.

### 3. The Primary and Junior Groups.

At the suggestion of the superintendents, separate grade conferences were planned for the teachers of the different ages. The first attempt was with the teachers of the primary-age group. One meeting was held, at which five teachers out of a possible <sup>twenty</sup> were present. This meeting was such a failure, that the plan was temporarily abandoned. At about this same time, group conferences were planned for the junior-age groups. The program for these conferences has included a study of the requirements of the junior teacher, the characteristics of the junior child, and various specific principles of teaching. In addition to the discussion of these topics, a few demonstrations were given of the application of these principles in an actual teaching situation. The group, itself, in these instances, was used as the class. Although a nucleus of junior teachers attended regularly, the question arose as to whether the group was large enough to warrant the continuance of these meetings. Those who were attending, however, because of the benefit they felt they were receiving, urged the leaders to do all in their power to continue the meetings. It was decided, therefore, to invite the teachers of the primary group, who, it will be recalled, were having no departmental conferences, to join the junior group. This

was done, with very satisfactory results.

Here again, the situation is not ideal, and yet this compromise is not without value, for the teachers are thus receiving instruction along the lines of better teaching method, in which the underlying principles are applicable to both primary and junior groups.

#### 4. The Intermediate Department.

It has been no small task to organize the teachers of this department, because they have so many other church activities to keep them busy. An attempt, has been made, however, to hold departmental conferences. At the first conference, the Young People's Director conducted the discussion in a somewhat catechetical manner. The meeting was not a success, for the teachers rebelled at the questions which had been asked. Realizing the mistake which they had made, the leaders decided to make amends as quickly as possible.

They concluded that it would be well to have a specially trained teacher come and lead the group in a study of the characteristics and needs of the early adolescent. This was done, but again it was very difficult to get the teachers to attend the meetings. This experience revealed the importance of being extremely careful in all plans of reorganization, and especially so in the introduction of a new project. The experience has also shown the leaders the need of coordinating all the activities of the church so that all the teachers can set aside the same night for Teachers' Meetings. In the meantime, the conferences are being held regularly, and teachers who attend are learning the psychology of this



age and the consequent importance of pupil organization.

#### 5. The Senior Department.

As stated in the "Diagnosis of the Needs of Trinity Church School," the Senior Department has been omitted from this part of the study because of its already splendid organization.

#### 6. The Adult Classes.

So much time has been spent in working with the Beginners' Department and in launching grade conferences, that nothing as yet has been done in regard to the adult classes.

### C. With Respect to Curriculum.

#### 1. Worship.

Next to the organization of the different grade conferences, the installation of a regular worship service was the prime factor of the year's work in reorganization. After the Educational Committee had studied the situation, it was decided that the best place to start the new project was in the Intermediate Department which was smaller than the group of primary and junior children and consequently easier to manage. Then, too, the superintendent of the department had shown an interest in improving the "Opening and Closing Exercises."

This being decided, the Young People's Director, his assistant, and the Intermediate Department superintendent met several times to discuss the possible changes in the "Opening and Closing Exercises." When this group had agreed as to

the best plan of procedure, a special meeting of all the teachers of the department was called. The cause was presented to them, with strong emphasis on the advantages of a real worship service. The teachers finally suggested that an attempt be made to introduce a worship service in place of the old "Opening and Closing Exercises."

The consent of the teachers having been gained, work on the new project was begun. This involved building up a program and training the children. The most difficult task was to find a person who could give a short worship talk or story. No one else being found, the superintendent, himself very capable, undertook the responsibility. The director of one of the church choirs offered to train the children in the music. For two Sundays, he came and taught the children the response, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the Earth keep silence before Him." The children, of course, had to be prepared for the change that was coming. Aside from learning the responses, they were taught to enter the auditorium in a more orderly manner. Everything pointed to a fine spirit of reverence. Very gradually, this new system was introduced. For the first few times, the "Opening Exercises" were used as the drill period and the "Closing Exercises" were used as the Worship period.

Then, finally, the day arrived for the final change. As a result of the careful preparation, the first worship service was very impressive. The classes gathered very quietly and reverently in the auditorium. When they were settled, the choir leader sang the response, "The Lord is in His Holy

Temple," then the whole group sang it twice. The Senior Pastor of the church then gave a splendid talk on the importance of being silent before God. After his address, the group again sang "The Lord is in His Holy Temple" following it by the Lord's Prayer and the Doxology. This whole service was so different from the usual "Closing Exercises" that it made a very evident impression upon the children. There was awe, surprise, reverence, and pleasure written on many a face.

This is just a beginning. It is difficult to keep that fine spirit at every service, but the enthusiasm created at this first service will help and encourage the superintendent to continue the good work that has been begun. It is hoped that the success of these services will be an incentive to the other departments to do likewise.

## 2. Instruction.

The Educational Committee has been spending most of its time on the instructional material of Trinity Church School. During the first part of the year, they studied the Sunday-School texts and made the following report of their findings which it is hoped, will start other members of the church studying the texts and making a fair evaluation of them.

In the report submitted by this Committee, the following findings and suggestions were incorporated:

1. The present text books are not adapted to fulfilling the purpose of the Church School
2. The content and vocabulary of the books are far beyond

the comprehension of the child.

3. The emphasis is on factual knowledge rather than on the needs of the pupil.

4. The Committee recommends that suitable books be provided to replace the old texts.<sup>1</sup>

Through the grade conferences, some of the teachers have begun to realize the inadequacy of the present textbooks. When the Church School staff realizes that something definite must be done with the present curriculum, the Educational Committee will be ready to present their suggestions for a better curriculum.

The lack of adequate training in worship and instruction has led the Educational Committee to suggest having a Daily Vacation Bible School in which newer teaching methods could be introduced. This school, it is felt, could serve as a model for further reorganization in the Sunday School. At present, the Educational Committee is working on the program for the summer's work.

### 3. Expression.

Due to inadequate equipment, very little has been done with the expressional phase of the curriculum. Through the grade conferences, the teachers have been made to realize the importance of expression and have been urged to encourage the children to express themselves in as many different ways as possible. It will be impossible, however, to make an extensive improvement here until separate classrooms are available.

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1. Cf. Informal report on Sunday School Books made by Educational Committee.

### III. SUMMARY.

From this report, we note the first steps that have been taken in this attempt to reorganize Trinity Church School. A great many of the teachers have begun to realize the importance of Grade Conferences. Through the conferences they have been made conscious of definite shortcomings and desirous of improvement in equipment, in organization, in curricula and in method. One department has had a glimpse of the great possibilities inherent in a real worship service. The church, itself, has become more conscious of the work of the Church School through contact with the leaders of this movement and through articles such as the following one, which have appeared in the church paper from time to time:

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#### Changes in Sunday School the Result of Grade Conferences.

The hearty cooperation of the whole Sunday School staff accounts for the success of the Group Conferences which met for the first time last month.

As the result of these meetings several things have been brought to the careful consideration of those in charge of the various departments of the Sunday School. The library has had several new books on child psychology and Sunday School methods added to its collection.

In the beginner's department, a real attempt is being made to improve their room. The first visible sign was apparent last Sunday in the rearrangement of the chairs.

Plans are also being made for a short worship program, on somewhat the same principle as that used in the Junior congregation, which, it is hoped, the New Year will usher into the intermediate department that meets at the Gospel Church on 56th Street. A special committee has been working on the details of this program in order to make it meet the needs of the intermediate child in the

very best way possible.

Arrangements are being considered for a rally of all the teachers some time in February. At this larger gathering it is planned to secure some prominent Christian educator as the main speaker."<sup>1</sup>

Although the work of reorganizing Trinity Church School has had a good start, there is still much to be done. Such a process of necessity must be slow and gradual. It will, therefore, undoubtedly take several years before the school can be ranked with the best church schools of our country. Trying as this may seem at times, nothing can be done about it. Any attempt to force the issue at once, before conditions are ripe for more radical changes, would only thwart its own ends.

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1. Trinity Life-Lite, December 1930.

#### CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION: A SUMMARY OF THE PRINCIPLES  
OF REORGANIZATION EVOLVED FROM THIS EX-  
PERIMENT.

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CONCLUSION: A SUMMARY OF THE PRINCIPLES  
OF REORGANIZATION EVOLVED FROM THIS EX-  
PERIMENT.

The reorganization of Trinity Church School, as we have reviewed this undertaking, has not only resulted in starting a series of improvements in the local Church School but has also brought out a series of principles underlying such reorganization, which may be of significance in the further reconstruction of the school. More than this, it is hoped, they may be of value to others who face a similar problem. The principles evolved from this experience are as follows:

I. The whole situation should be thoroughly understood before any steps in actual reorganization are undertaken.

A study of the history and a survey of present conditions will help much in the development of a sympathetic understanding of the people and in the determination of what are the most important needs to be met.

II. The people, as a whole, should be led to realize the need for improvement.

To avoid unnecessary friction, the people should be



taught to understand the whole situation. The problems should be brought to the minds of the people through informal education, such as quiet conversation, and the distribution of reading material on improved methods, and through formal education, such as teachers conferences and assignments in text books.

III. The suggestions for improvement should come from the people themselves.

If the people are properly educated to see the needs of the local situation and to understand the importance of making the changes, they will themselves, suggest ways for the improvement of the work. Such changes will much more readily meet with the approval of the group than changes imposed upon them by the leader.

IV. The process of reorganization should be adjusted to the immediate situation.

Careful consideration should be made concerning the special characteristics and peculiarities of the people with whom one is working. The reorganizer must be ready and willing to adjust himself to other suitable suggestions from the group. Then, too, the available equipment must be taken into consideration and all changes must of necessity, as a temporary expedient at best, be adapted to the present situation.

V. The reorganizer should be tactful, patient, and persevering.

In whatever is suggested or done, the reorganizer must keep his people in mind. He must be very careful in the way that he makes his suggestions, executes his plans, and performs his general duties. He must not be easily discouraged with the people or with the task in hand. When everything seems to be apparently useless he must continue steadfastly in spite of difficulties until the task is finished.

VI. Nothing should be done without minute, careful preparation.

The various steps in the reorganization should be carefully planned before they are executed. Every little detail should be considered, so that the best impression may be made when the project is presented before the group for the first time. "Well begun is half done."

VII. The reorganizer should be ever alert to sense every situation.

The reorganizer should understand his people so well that he will realize a mistake as soon as it has been made. Then, too, he must be ready to make the necessary changes even at the cost of his pride.

VIII. Confidence should be placed in the people who are helping in the process of reorganization.

The reorganizer and his assistants must have faith in the people with whom they are working. Whenever a task is performed well, those who have had a share in it should receive the credit. The people must feel that this is their work. The reorganizer must realize that by himself he can do very little.

IX. Throughout the process of reorganization, the primary objectives of the Church School must always be kept in mind.

Although it is very necessary to have good organization, it is far more important to develop the spiritual life of the children. Care must be exercised to guard against the organization's becoming an end in itself. It must always be kept a means to an end.

X. Throughout the entire process, all efforts should be motivated and directed by prayer.

"Apart from me ye can do nothing."<sup>1</sup>

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1. John 15:5.

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