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Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_schreiberv@csl.edu

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THE URBAN CHURCH IN A TRANSITION COMMUNITY

by

Vernon Roy Schreiber

A thesis presented to the Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Divinity

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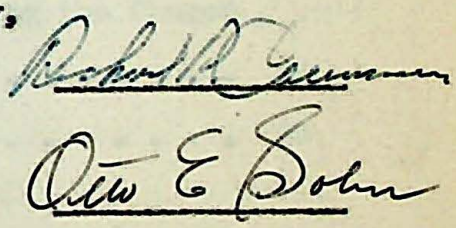

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THE URBAN CHURCH IN A TRANSITION COMMUNITY

I. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of an urban community which is in the process of changing status upon the life of a church in that community. To proceed in this study it was first necessary to establish the presence of distinguishable communities in an urban setting and to determine the pattern of change which might be present in such communities. However, before the role of the church in such communities could be examined, the writer felt it necessary to present a brief and admittedly incomplete study of urban social forces upon the individual. This procedure was followed so that the place of the community in a person's values might be better understood and evaluated.

Probably the most significant factor brought to the attention of the writer was the emphasis on the institution as a new substitute for neighborhood and kinship ties. This seems to result in a corresponding lack of geographical responsibility. Nevertheless, it was also found that the community does have a place in the urbanite's evaluations, although chiefly as a symbol of class status, cultural rating,

and financial investment. After examining these factors, it is the writer's belief that these two sources of influence have a major effect on the policies of individual congregations: 1) The emphasis on membership in institutions at the expense of neighborliness; 2) The desire for status through identification with a certain type of community. Therefore the writer has attempted to present some of the methods of a church in the face of environmental pressure and also to examine some of the problems which face such a congregation.

II. The Presence of Communities within the City

The modern city grows up around the factory[1] and serves as a trade center for a wide area.[2] In the city there is the concentration of industrial and commercial, financial and administrative facilities and activities, transportation and communication lines, and cultural and recreational equipment. Any brief description of the city will be painfully over-simplified. The sociologist can list a great number of types of cities which have more or less specialized functions,[3] and individual characteristics will in turn create different social characteristics.[4]

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1. Lewis Mumford, The Culture of Cities. "The factory became the nucleus of the new urban organism. Every other detail of life was subordinate to it. Even the utilities, such as the water supply and the minimum of governmental buildings that were necessary to the town's existence often, if they had not been built by an earlier generation, entered belatedly: an afterthought. It was not merely art and religion that were treated by the utilitarian as mere embellishments : intelligent political administration was in the same category." p. 161.
2. Samuel C. Kincheloe, The American City and Its Church, p.11.
3. Murray H. Leiffer, City and Church in Transition. Part One of this book analyzes types of cities, e.g. industrial, commercial, mining, resort, university, industrial suburb, residential suburb.
4. Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," The American Journal of Sociology, XLIV, (July, 1938), p. 6.

Nevertheless, sociologists have attempted to define the city in a manner which will provide a common ground for study. Louis Wirth suggests this: "For sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals."[5] Such a definition seems to serve our purposes as we attempt to study a common trait of the urban way of life, namely, the development of various communities within the modern city. The function of a city may differ from that of another in certain respects, but research invariably has discovered "cities within cities," regardless of industrial or commercial specialization. Somewhere between the time when a city reaches a population of fifty thousand and when it arrives at the hundred fifty thousand mark certain crucial changes take place. Formerly the resident thought in terms of total city, and the neighborhood differences were small and of minor significance. With the increasing density of population, the various communities, and with them their local institutions, begin to attain selfhood.[6]

The very largeness of the city itself helps to create separate communities because large numbers involve a

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5. Ibid., p. 8.
6. Leiffer, op. cit., p. 131

greater range of individual variation and also establish a greater potential differentiation between individuals. As a result of these variations there will also be a spatial segregation of individuals according to color, ethnic heritage, economic and social status, tastes and preferences.[7]

Furthermore, the city is constantly straining to expand, physically and economically.[8] It calls for more people to aid in this expansion. Hence the city has always been the historic melting pot of races, peoples, and cultures. The city does not merely tolerate individual differences but even seeks such differences and rewards them. It has brought together people from the ends of the earth because they are different and thus useful to one another, rather than because they are homogenous and like-minded.[9] There is the additional factor of the city's failure to reproduce itself.[10] For that reason alone it must recruit its migrants from other cities, the countryside and - in this country until recently - from other countries.

All of these forces result in a situation where diverse population elements inhabit a compact settlement; and because the groups are so diverse, they also tend to

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7. Wirth, op. cit., p. 10.
8. Mumford, op. cit., p. 245
9. Wirth, loc. cit.
10. Ibid.

become segregated from one another.[11] Similarly, those who have similar status and needs unconsciously drift together, consciously select those they seem to understand, or are forced by circumstances to enter the same area.[12]

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11. Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, Middletown in Transition, p. 467.
12. Wirth, op. cit., p. 15. See also Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 9 for similar analysis.

III. POPULATION SUCCESSION - A PATTERN

Population groupings can be determined as a trait of the urban way of life and, at a given time, be approximately defined on a city map. But the reality of such groupings is not a guarantee that the groups will never relocate themselves. On the contrary, the city's consistent expansion and call for more people promises the sociologist steady work in tracing population movements.

The distribution of these various groups furthermore reflects a definite process of succession. Kincheloe says, "Ancient philosophers used to debate whether they could step twice into the same river. The city, like the river, is an ever changing entity."[1] An immigrant group on its arrival typically settles in a compact colony in a low-rent industrial area located in the transitional zone near the center of the city.[2] If the group is of large size several different areas of initial settlement may develop in various industrial sections. These congested areas of first settlement are characterized by the perpetuation of many European cultural traits. After some years of residence in such an area, the group, as it improves

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1. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 15
2. Paul Frederick Cressey, "Population Succession in Chicago: 1898-1930," The American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (July, 1938), pp. 86ff.

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its economic and social standing, moves outward to some more desirable residential district. Kincheloe summarizes the typical case of Chicago:

> The original settlers, largely of British origin, started democratic traditions, founded Protestant churches, and gave a trend to future developments. The next great wave was that of the sturdy, home-loving, industrious Germans, following them came the neat, methodical Scandanavians, both of these groups having dominantly Lutheran backgrounds. With them, and immediately following, came the good-natured Irish of the Roman Catholic faith. Then the source of growth shifted to the south and east of Europe, with the coming of the Polish, Italian, and Russian populations, and numbers from smaller countries.[3]

Kincheloe also describes similar waves of population movement on the part of rural immigrants, Negroes, and Mexicans.[4]

The patterns of distribution, i. e., the choice of direction, on the part of the immigrant groups differed somewhat from that of the American groups in Chicago; but there is a striking similarity in the way in which all urban changes take place. Almost without exception, four phases in this process can be identified: invasion, conflict, recession, and resettlement.[5] But the picture which the city presents in this process of succession and transition is not always a pleasant one. The crowding of people into a low-level area, the struggle to push out into something better, the deterioration of a larger portion of the city, invasion

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3. Kincheloe, op. cit., pp. 7-8.
4. Ibid.
5. Cressey, op. cit. p. 62.

and the second cycle of invasion, the ills of life piled up in the inner-city region are all a part of this process.[6] Mumford states that you can expect little else from the city because it is, in its modern form, a child of the Industrial Revolution and capitalism. If he were a theologian he would probably ascribe to the modern city a certain natural depravity.[7] American sociologists as a whole, however, do not join in such a rousing denunciation, but rather look on the present state of the city as a case of misused vigor.[8] And both sides agree that something must be done.

6. Kincheloe, op. cit., "Those who have to live in the inner city have the poorest light and air. They have the poorest housing, lacking facilities necessary for wholesome living. They have the highest density of population . . . the most sickness, the highest infant mortality rate, and the highest death rate by tuberculosis." p. 41.

7. Mumford, op. cit., "One must view the swift development of the metropolis from an ideal position of time and watch the transition that takes place over a period of a century. First the back gardens and breathing spaces disappear, since the land is becoming too dear for such areas: then the original residential areas are eaten into from within, as if by termites, as the original inhabitants move out and are replaced by a lower economic strata: then these overcrowded quarters, serving as an area of transition between the commercial center and the better dormitory areas become in their disorder and their misery special breeding points for disease and crime: see careful investigation of the Chicago sociologists. But every area of the metropolis tends to be a transitional area; and because of the very instability and uncertainty as to future uses, each area tends to go through a period of instability in which the necessary repairs and renewals are not made. Since stability of uses and values means, from the commercial standpoint, a state little better than death, there is no motive in the existing economic regime sufficient to combat the habits that make for deterioration and blight." p. 245.

8. Charles E. Merriam, "Urbanism," The American Journal of Sociology, XLV (March 1940). "To me it seems that the faults of our cities are not those of decay and impending decline but of exuberant vitality crowding its way forward under tremendous pressure - the flood rather than the drought." p. 729

IV. Urban Attitudes

Although it is possible to chart the population according to certain groupings, the very nature of a city's constant transition indicates that this distribution into certain areas is not always clearly defined. Nor does the fact that groups will form population patterns mean that these same groups have found an adequate substitute for the more solid foundation of the primitive or truly rural society. Population grouping is not at all synonymous with the arrival at complete adjustment to a new way of life - a life comparatively new to the entire world.

The above mentioned process of population succession was outlined in the previous chapter without any deliberate attempt to present its impact upon the personality of the individual living in an affected community. Before this impact can be considered it will be necessary to investigate a few of the factors present in urban living which affect a man's attitude towards his fellowman. City residence in a certain block or in any area cannot immunize the dweller from certain common traits of urbanism, and these traits in turn create certain attitudes towards other people in the block.

First of all, urbanites generally meet on the basis of

secondary rather than primary contacts.[1] They are dependent upon more people for the satisfactions of their life-need than are rural people and thus are associated with a greater number of organized groups. But the contacts are termed secondary because the people are less dependent upon particular persons, and their dependence upon others is confined to a small segment of the other's complete round of daily activity. Related to this limited contact with people is the additional knowledge that you are only one out of hundreds of thousands, and this makes a person feel like a rather anonymous character. There are, to be sure, many people about, and they always seem to be jammed together in too little space. But in this very density, in the closeness of physical contacts, there is invariably a resulting distance in social contacts. The frequent movement of great numbers of individuals in a congested habitat also gives rise to impatience and irritation.

Continuing the study of the urbanite's personality, it is to be remembered that we previously mentioned that the city thrives on heterogeneity.[2] It sets up rewards for individuals by calling on them to perform its different tasks, by establishing a spirit of strict competition, by putting a premium upon eccentricity, novelty, efficient performance and inventiveness. However, it is also true

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1. Wirth, op. cit., p. 12.
2. Cf., p. 5., and also Wirth's entire article, op. cit.

that the city exercises a leveling influence which restrains personality.[3] Mumford would not be so kind as to speak of a leveling process. To him it is rather a destructive process, and his view of the city is not very happy:

> Let us sum up these diversions. To counteract an intolerable occupation with arithmetical abstractions and mechanical instruments, an almost equally abstract interest in the stomach and sexual organs, divorced from their organic relations. To counteract boredom and isolation, mass spectacles; to make up for biological inferiority, a series of collective games and exhibitions, based on withering specializations of the body. In short, the metropolis is rank with forms of negative vitality . . . There is salvation by aspirin. . . In this mangled state, the impulse to lives from apparently healthy personalities, as it might depart from someone who has been crushed under the wheels of a locomotive. The impulse to die supplants it. And just as the will-to-live can triumph over all but catastrophic accidents or derangements to the physical organism, so the will-to-die can eat cancerously into a personality, until the body itself, no matter how outwardly healthy, is tainted and finally consumed by the malady.[4]

Mumford to the contrary, let us assume that a will-to-live still exists. The urban life that is thus willed is generally a shallow thing. The urban world puts a premium on visual recognition; it must have visible signs of a person's worth and status because there is no time for individual social intercourse. The resulting frustration and loneliness because of this lack of response upon the part of individuals leads to a type of recreation referred to by

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3. Wirth, op. cit. p. 17.
4. Mumford, op. cit., p. 271.

Mumford in the above quotation. What the community does not furnish, the urbanite will purchase. Catering to thrill and furnishing means of escape from drudgery, monotony, and routine thus becomes one of the major functions of urban recreation, which at best furnishes means for creative self-expression and spontaneous group association, but which more typically results in passive spectatorship[5] and the worship of channel-swimmers, home run kings etc. as supreme heroes.[6]

However, the abilities of urban folk either to create for themselves visible signs that will command recognition or to lose themselves in mob action does not solve the basic problem of neighborly life. The studies of urbanism which came to the writer's attention showed a common awareness that the city is continuing to destroy the common bonds of kinship because of its largeness, density of population, potential differences between people, and the general demand for competition and change.

The city has also attacked the family.[7] The urban family, to any appreciable extent, has ceased to be a unity

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5. Wirth, op. cit., p. 22.
6. Mumford, op. cit., shows this worship reaching its climax in the modern metropolis as the people fete the hero riding through the skyscraper lined street in an open car "by emptying on the head of the illustrious hero the contents of their waste-paper basket, swirling festoons of ticker tape, or, when exhausted of the normal supply of paper, with ribbons of toilet paper: the ultimate mark of metropolitan approbation: Bravo!" p. 268
7. Kincheloe, op. cit., Chapter Three, "The Family and Its Home in the City." pp. 61ff.

of economic production. This change made possible a relaxation of authority and regimentation by the family head. Then, too, the actual or potential employment of wife and children has signified their economic independence and created a new basis for family relations.[8] Furthermore, the family as a unit of social life is emancipated from the larger kinship group characteristic of the country, and individual members pursue their own diverging interests in their vocational, educational, religious, recreational and political life.[9] Another very real problem is interpreting the immigrant parent, American rural of recent date or foreign-born, to their city-raised children and vice versa.

Another factor which aids the disintegration of common bonds between urbanites is the matter of home-ownership - or lack of it. Overwhelmingly the city-dweller is not a home-owner.[10] Since a transitory habitat does not promote binding traditions or sentiments, once more the urbanite is rarely a true neighbor.

In conclusion, there is little opportunity for the individual to obtain any kind of a conception of the city as a whole, the people in it, or to recognize his place in

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8. Ernest W. Burgess, "The Family in a Changing Society," in The American Journal of Sociology, LIII (May, 1948), p. 418. (In this paper the author stresses the fact that the family is in a period of experimentation, seeking to find new ties for family life. The old ties are no longer sufficient.)
9. Wirth, op. cit., p. 21.
10. Ibid. p. 17.

people in it, or to recognize his place in the total scheme.[11] The end result of the city's many points of pressure on individuals as they behave in different social relationships is almost total disinterest in one's fellow man except as that acquaintanceship can be used for one's own purposes. The old concept of neighborhood and neighborliness has vanished. And thus the city-dweller has become an individual; but he is a lost individual. Kincheloe cites one young worker's remark as typical: "'My community is down where I work. I only sleep out here.'"[12]

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11. The Lynds, op. cit., "Progressively as one comes down the social scale, the chance of becoming a lost individual, untied in any active sense to community-wide life and values, increases. One 'lives in' a town, 'makes one's money there,' is part of its 'available labor supply,' rather than being necessarily an integral part of the town." p. 467

12. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 15.

V. The Turn to Institutions

The city reduces the individual to a stage of virtual impotence and also weakens the traditional ties of human association. However, the result of all of these influences does not mean that the city dweller has lost all human instincts. Actually, urban existence involves a greater - although more complicated and variable - interdependence between man and man. Because of the ineffectiveness of actual kinship ties in urban life men therefore create fictional kinship groups; they turn to institutions and organizations. Dr. Robert E. Parks, pioneer sociologist, has defined a modern urban community as a constellation of institutions and organizations.[1] The community is now too large, too mixed in its nature of people, for the average citizen to share in general neighborhood life. But this average citizen does belong to a church, or a labor union, a bowling team, or similar groups. The young man who finds his community where he works[2] will also turn to the same group for his other activities.

This new concept of community life is aided by the fact that the worker already expects to travel to a different locale

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1. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Cf. p. 15 of this paper.

to earn his wages. As a result of this practice he comes to expect the same procedure for his social life. According to Paul H. Douglas, one may expect such action and attitudes because of the nature of the city and its physical structure: it is an attempt to combat the overcrowding of the center facilities by rapid transit. The use of rapid transit tends to equalize distant and near-by populations in the matter of accessibility to the most central institutions. Thus the chief users of a utility are frequently able to live far from it. Such a triumph of accessibility over proximity generally removes the more prosperous elements of a city community to the remoter and less crowded sections. Transit facilities are the clue to the situation. Centers and subcenters dominate the entire metropolitan area and fix the structure. Relatively little of the vital functions or relations is left on a purely neighborhood basis, at least for adult populations. And what is left, or seems to remain, is much less simple and localized than it appears. [3]

However, it is doubtful that the city through the method of transportation to central institutions has adequately met the needs of the inhabitants for social intercourse, no matter how natural they consider such life. For some it may succeed, but not for all. Too many are never adequately

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3. Paul H. Douglas, 1930 City Churches, pp. 200-208.

reached.[4] Nevertheless, the institution, the meeting place, has replaced true neighborhood living as people usually imagine it.[5]

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4. Mumford, op. cit., "These institutions often increase in size in order to measure up to megalopolitan standards; but what is true for biological organisms holds true, it would appear, for social bodies: effective growth requires cell-division, not merely a swelling of the original nucleus." p. 249.
5. H. Paul Douglas, The Church in a Changing City, p. 176.

VI. The Place of the Community in a Person's Values

In some respects the surveys of the city almost appear contradictory. On the one hand, the writer found that urban population is selected and distributed into more or less distinct settlements. On the other hand, such population groupings are not stable; and they do not guarantee that the urbanite is actively, personally interested in the man next door. Rather, it seems that the urban way of life would make such interest an accident rather than a probability, and that the trend is to institutions. What then, is the place of the community in a person's values?

To the question of whether a neighborhood is a matter of indifference to the average inhabitant, the reply is in the negative. Despite the weakening of true neighborliness, it is still possible to speak of the "invasion" of a residential area. While community life may have disappeared to a great extent, there are certain values connected with one's community which cause conflict with other groups.

People are definitely concerned with their social position among people with whom they have some special connection, as in their profession and their own chosen circle of friends and allies. But they are also concerned with their position and that of the people with whom they identify themselves

in the larger community. In an impersonal setting, such as the large city, community status, as we have seen previously,[1] cannot depend on any intimate evaluation of the person. Instead, certain easily recognizable traits, such as possessions, become symbolic of each status class. An area of residence is one such symbol of status because it is such a visible thing and clearly has a status value in the eyes of the community.[2]

Therefore the tendency is for residents to resist the entrance into their neighborhood of others who would give the area a less desirable character. It seems a paradox that while one's neighborhood appears to act as a badge of his status, it retains this symbolic character only so long as a people of a desirable sort are connected with it. A person can attach himself to a neighborhood and use it as a sort of badge of his status, but the status value of that symbol depends on the place in the community of the whole class of persons. Therefore the status value of the symbol is always subject to change. The cycle of population succession has been outlined in a previous chapter: invasion, resistance, a rapid influx of new residents if resistance fails, and then a complete resettlement.

One cause for invasion in the first place is that someone of a minority group wants to shake himself loose and

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1. Cf. p. 10ff.
2. Harold A. Gibbard, "The Status Factor in Residential Successions," in The Am. Jour. of Sociology, XLVI (May 1941), 836

seek a visible means of demonstrating his higher social position. The pioneers tend to be individuals who have achieved a little greater economic success than their neighbors and who therefore also desire to improve their social status by moving into an area of greater prestige. These people often lead an invasion of a new area.[3] Others follow them. The tendency is for the economic and status level of an area of invasion to stand relatively high, in the eyes of the masses of the population type involved, during the early stages of the succession cycle. Frequently those people who are anxious to share the reputation of the first invaders try to follow them. The prestige of the first families provides an impetus for the continuation of the invasion.

But the established residents will resist the invasion. Although they may recognize social differences among those of their own type, they fail to identify members of other groups in the necessarily heterogeneous city beyond their broad racial or cultural affiliations. If a successful Italian doctor should move into an area, he is still just an Italian or, more likely, a "Dago." Families who lead invasions are viewed by the residents not as people having esteem among others of their own kind but as people fitting the existing stereotype of the race or nationality to which they belong.[4]

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3. Cressey, op. cit., p. 62.
4. Gibbard, op. cit., p. 858.

The tendency, then, is to either resist the invasion or abandon the area to the newcomers. Such movement may involve merely a gradual transition which slowly replaces the older population, or it may take place with such rapidity as to be thought of in terms of a stampede.[5] It is interesting to note that if it were not for the fact that the newcomers are usually unwelcome, the invasion would be checked before it even started. It would be checked because of the lack of dwellings into which other could move. The first families, whether the wish it or not, serve the double function of driving out the old occupants and attracting more from their own group to replace those who leave.[6]

Before such a turnover occurs, however, the established residents may attempt to stop the continued influx of newcomers or even set up controls in anticipation of invasion. This resistance may take several forms. Among them are, first, individual decisions not to rent or sell property to any so-called "undesirable" type followed by personal pressure upon others to make similar decisions to hold out. Following this, collective agreements have been formally entered into by property owners who are banded together in neighborhood improvement associations. Zoning devices are also put to use. There is also subscription to the code of ethics of

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5. Cressey, loc. cit.
6. Gibbard, op. cit., pp. 839-840.

the National Association of Real Estate Boards.[7] A final resort would be mob action.

This conflict arises because a person sees a symbol losing its value. Coupled with the status factor is also the possibility that the possession which have gained this distinction are equally in danger of devaluation, although this claim is often nothing more than an emotional complaint. Actually, it is more likely that for some time the residence has a greater dollar value in the eyes of the newcomer than it would to the average buyer. Nevertheless, the economic factor cannot be discounted; there may be a financial loss in store for the old residents. Or the invading group may be viewed as a new element in economic competition, a new source of labor, and therefore a threat.[8]

People may not be concerned about their neighbor as a brother, but they are concerned with the status factor of their residence, they are concerned with the money value of their possessions. And although the elders may have little

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7. Article 34 of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Real Estate Boards to which all member realtors subscribe, reads, "A Realtor should never be instrumental in in introducing a character of property or occupancy, members of any race or nationality, or any individuals whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values of that neighborhood." Quoted in Gibbard, op. cit., who adds, "The article has been universally interpreted to mean that no realtor should rent or sell a house in a solidly white neighborhood to a Negro. No consistent policy has been followed in its application to European immigrants." p. 840.

8. Leiffer, op. cit., p. 218.

contact with their neighbors, they know that their children do. Children are the real neighbors from the point of view of geography. [9] To "save" them from predetermined bad contacts with the new kind of neighbors, the adults will go to great effort to remove themselves from the invaders.

The amount of conflict accompanying invasion will depend on the cultural differences, prejudices and economic disturbances involved. There may actually be little conflict involved in this process. There are occasions when recession precedes invasion. As an area grows old the housing accomodations become obsolete, street paving and other public improvements may deteriorate, or there may be encroachments from trade and industry.[10] Under such circumstances, as the area becomes less attractive, the older residents depart leaving unoccupied houses behind them, and this encourages the entrance of some new group into an area. Thus in some cases the normal sequence may be reversed and recession may precede rather than follow invasion.[11]

This process of previous recession is often closely connected with the position of the unattached persons of the city. The areas within the city in which the unattached can find rooms tend to be the poorest ones. Although large numbers of unattached persons have been in American cities

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9. Kincheloe, op. cit., p.20.
10. Wirth, op. cit., p. 15.
11. Gibbard, op. cit., p. 63.

for almost a hundred years, this particular consequence of the Industrial Revolution has not been solved. Few suitable living arrangements for the bulk of them have developed.[12] They find their homes in what might be called "the cast-offs among residences."[13] They, like the immigrant, live in areas from which the upper and middle classes are moving and which the industries and commercial houses are invading. Not only are the areas characterized by economic blight, but by a high degree of social disorganization to which the unattached contribute after they have been there for some time.[14] In such an invasion, there may be little conflict.

But whether there is conflict or merely orderly recession in any area, the important point to consider is that resentment or indifference or both is present in every population shift. Because the city is large there are many groups of people opposed to each other. In proportion to its density social contacts become increasingly distant and difficult. Because of the heterogeneity of the city, there has been a breakdown of community life and a resulting turn to a new form of community life, a turning to selected institutions and organizations. And in the midst of all this disturbance and social upheaval stands the urban church.

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12. Arnold M. Rose, "Living Arrangements of Unattached Persons," in The American Sociological Review, XII (August, 1947), p. 430.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid. Rose comments, "The problem can be conceived of as one of cultural lag. It would seem that society still considers the condition of being unattached as either a temporary or an unusual condition." p. 431.

VII. The Church As It Avoids Environmental Pressure

In the face of population shifts and all the attending disturbances of community transition, the church must attempt to remain a going concern. This is no small task because the church is definitely affected by the condition of its community. In a recent study Marcus Lang demonstrated that Lutheran churches are also affected.[1] His study corroborated the findings of Sanderson, whose general results were these:

> ....as a rule churches making the most progress are located in districts undergoing favorable social trends, while churches making least progress or losing ground are as a rule located in districts undergoing relatively unfavorable social change. Most of the churches in better territory were found to be making progress at maximum or above-average rates. Most of the churches in poorer territory were found to be making below-average progress or actually losing ground.[2]

Research has found that this struggle on the part of a church is usually reduced to a struggle to avoid the consequences of adverse environmental changes. The most radical means would be to abandon the building just as its members are

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1. Marcus Titus Lang, "The Relationship of Church Progress in Missouri Synod Lutheran Churches of the St. Louis Metropolitan District to the Status of the Communities in Which They Are Located." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Washington,University, 1946).
2. Ross W. Sanderson, The Strategy of City Church Planning, quoted in Lang, ibid., p. 6.

abandoning their homes. However, the usual financial loss involved in such a procedure[3] plus the problem of proper relocation in relation to the members[4] generally invites the attempt to continue through the selective operation of the church in the original vicinity, that is, an appeal to a limited number of people of a given sort.[5]

Such a church seeks to be what it has been in the past, and surveys indicate that this ambition may be successful, at least for some time. The method is to retain a selective hold on the locality and at the same time build up city-wide prestige. Through the attraction of a widely scattered constituency the diminishing local supply may well be counteracted. Research by Douglas on three neighboring churches in such a situation showed that all fitted themselves to the city in the same way: they drew a following from the best areas, however remote, and, in the main, avoided the poorer ones, however near.[6]

The program may go a step further by sending out its professional workers to appeal to the new and generally undesirable population. Such churches sometimes are able to hold dual constituencies by means of two separate programs. When the two constituencies are socially distinct, they

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3. Kincheloe, op. cit, p. 104.
4. Douglas, One Thousand City Churches, p. 262
5. Douglas, The Church in a Changing City, p. xvii.
6. Ibid., p. 252.

attend services at different hours and belong in the main to separate organizations. The work is under one roof, carried on through the same staff and administratively one, but the right hand of such a church frequently does not know what the left hand is doing. The hope is that gradually through the years the two constituencies will tend to fuse and to develop a new and broader basis of fellowship. [7]

Whether a second constituency is developed or not, churches can continue to function by means of selectivity. A gifted pulpit ministry and an active social program will often hold enough members of a particular sort. In addition, there is the appeal to the loyalties of the "old guard" and the effective use of the city's transportation facilities. In examining another church Douglas concluded,

> What the case proves is that a downtown church can maintain itself by transporting adherents from long distances. It does not prove that this can be done without a selective appeal to distinctive urban traits and habits, with the consequent marked distortion of the normal proportions of a population group. These far-coming adherents no longer think of the support of a downtown church by up-town people as a "missionary" proposition. It is rather a normal expression of the essential relations of certain classes of population to it. [8]

There is also the hope that the situation will not always be so unpleasant and that the right kind of environment and people will come back again some day.[9]

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7. Douglas, 1000 City Churches, p. 135.
8. Douglas, The Church in a Changing City, p. 176.
9. F.A. Hertwig, "Must the Downtown Church Die?" in Today, I (February, 1946). In addition to stating that the Gospel

Such advice and such methods of compromise or avoidance will often succeed in the case of the centrally located church, the true downtown church.[10] The church in a deteriorating residential section will also try the same methods in most cases.[11] However, escape through such means in the face of adverse environmental change rarely succeeds. Unless it moves, it can die or continue to live for a time but at a "poor dying" rate.[12]

As a result, we find "remnants of former glory"[13] scattered throughout the city. Douglas traced the downward course of a church in St. Louis for ten years following the previous decade during which it stood still. It was the last survivor of a slow retreat which had swept a dozen of the strongest churches of the city out of a favored residential area of a quarter of a century ago, now teeming with sordid Negro tenements and the crowded homes of rural immigrants.

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is for all people, the author reminds the reader of these three points: "1. The blighted areas in our large cities are not going to remain blighted to the end of time. Tremendous forces, federal, state, and city, are now setting themselves to the task of rehabilitation. Witness St. Louis, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and New York! No city can continue to rot and remain a solvent city. 2. Trans-city superways, more modern and swift means of transportation will soon enable our suburban members and their children to reach the old church in perhaps one fourth of the time they now require. 3. In this age of social legislation all indications point to the dawn of another chance for the old blighted neighborhood. Stay on the ground floor!"

10. Most writers seem to make a distinction between the accessible, centrally located church and those in blighted residential areas. It would seem that Hertwig has failed to make this most important distinction in advancing arguments in favor of aging and dying churches.

11. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 101.

12. Douglas, The Church in a Changing City, p. xxi.

13. Douglas, 1000 City Churches, p. 120

During this period of decay it progressively lopped off one function after another until it had become practically a shell of its former self. Its actual constituency was so remote that when a new site was chosen it was entirely beyond the city limits.[14] A church whose pulpit was made famous by one of the most original and outstanding religious leaders of another generation can no longer gain such a following.[15] Members decide not to wait for improved transportation; the coming generation selects a different church.[16]

Graphs of the total Protestant membership by natural areas, arranged from downtown out to and including the suburbs, indicate that the graveyard of white American Protestant churches in Chicago has pushed farther out as the city has grown.[17] Hertwig reports that in the flight from blighted areas and downtown sections at least eight Detroit Lutheran churches of various synodical connections have sold out and moved out in the past twenty-five years and that he has helped in such a sale of a Missouri Synod church.[18] He adds that a number of others have already decided to move as soon as possible and tells of his Congregational Church members who have already sold a $300,000 church plant (replacement value: multiply by two) to a Negro congregation for $100,000. They moved way out into a new neighborhood and, Hertwig

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14. Ibid., p. 89.
15. Ibid., p. 120.
16. Hertwig, op. cit., pp. 6.7.
17. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 107
18. Hertwig, op. cit., p. 5.

concludes, they "are now conducting services in a public school, much to the dissatisfaction of the members who must remain in the old neighborhood. The others who attend the services in the school are also discouraged. They will have to wait a long time before they can again have a church in Detroit."[19]

The above quotation is included to show that moving sometimes does not work out as well as had been hoped. During the period of selectivity its members became scattered. Because of the financial loss incurred in selling out, it cannot purchase a more strategic downtown location. Nevertheless, drawing members from all quarters, it wants a strategic location in exchange for a former location which had become non-strategic. But this is very different from a church's settling down to identify itself with a highly localized neighborhood. Thus its relation to a new environment may again be relatively slight.[20] The church may, in fact, move several times, erecting costly structures each time, only to find that there is no end to the cycle. Coincidental with the first relocation or after repeating the process a few times, the relocated church may become so weakened and disorganized that it finds it has moved only to die somewheres else.[21]

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19. Ibid.
20. Douglas, 1000 City Churches, pp. 262-265.
21. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 104.

VIII. Problems in Discovering the Community

There has been no more far-reaching change in recent times than in man's neighborhood and community relationships, and it has been a change in which the churches have been deeply involved.[1] The churches are involved because of the Great Commission given to them that, regardless of their own preferences and aversions, they have a message for all men.[2] In the face of city changes and city problems this task has not become easier than it was in the days of the Apostles. In line with this commission, denominations would no doubt like to attain the ideal of seeing their churches located throughout the city, reaching all people in the immediate vicinity of each church. This challenge is now before the congregations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Hertwig put it into print in the initial copy of the Missouri Synod's journal of practical missionary procedure:

> This shifting of churches with the shifting of populations has recently come under the severe indictment of some of the university professors and educators lecturing to their classes in sociology. Said one of them: "The churches are business institutions, pure and simple. When business becomes unprofitable for the budget, they move out from the old neighborhoods of our metro-

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1. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 14.
2. Matthew 28: 19.20.

> politan cities into the 'better' sections. It seems to us that they ought to stay and do their duty in places where they are most needed, namely, among the underprivileged and delinquents." Thus we also have been charged with neglecting and leaving the neighborhoods of publicans and sinners, contrary to the example of Jesus Christ.[3]

Although surveys may show that churches are primarily interested in themselves as institutions, the consensus of opinion on the part of sociologists is that the church must spend more time attempting to develop responsibility towards its parish - a term which has geographical connotations. It is the opinion of the writer that the development of parish responsibility in a geographical sense is the most important consideration of this study. However, the development of such responsibility requires the solution of many problems.

If the administrative branch of a congregation wants to discover a community and build itself into that community, it must first of all guard against the "institutionalism" which is so prevalent in the urban way of life.[4] The problem of the church is heightened by the fact that, in the opinion of many, the church has long been handicapped by institutionalism in its effort to be a positive force. Mumford, as usual, does not spare feelings: "In the medieval city the Church was a dominant: no part of life could fail to record its existence and its influence . . . In the metropolis

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3. Hertwig, op. cit., p. 6.
4. Cf. Chapter Five.

today the Church is a survival: its power rests upon numbers, wealth, material organization, not upon its capacity to give its stamp to the daily activity of men: it claims much, but except by repetition and rote, it contributes little to the active spiritual life of the city.[5] It is not our purpose to analyze and attempt to refute such charges. The fact remains that many sources point to religion as a bulwark against change. If this is so, it will reflect itself in a local congregation's attempt to meet changes in the community. Hertzler thinks that people may not expect the church to take the lead because:

> All institutions, as products of the past, as bulwarks against chaotic social relationships, and as highly organized social instrumentalities, tend to develop inflexibility in their functioning and fail to keep abreast of the needs of the times . . . Religious experience and expression are then easily confused with . . . minor and very temporary details - even check writing and attending church-promoted clubs. . . The most sinister fact, though, is that it is easier to administer the affairs of an organization than it is to keep . . . the life of the spirit immanent.[6]

Without too much quoting, we could also add the opinion of the Lynds that the churches are mostly on the defensive, mostly concerned with "bartering the opportunity for leadership in the area of change for the right to continue a shadowy leadership in the Changeless, as the church defines the latter."[7]

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5. Mumford, op. cit., p. 74.
6. J.O. Hertzler, "Religious Institutions," in The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, (March, 1948), pp. 11.12.
7. The Lynds, op. cit., p. 312.

Some analysts see the church as the institution which, unfortunately and unhappily, people have chosen as the one in which they can forget about urban pressures. Thus the Lynds: "So great is the individual human being's need for security that it may be that most people are incapable of tolerating change and uncertainty in all sectors of life at once; and, if their culture exposes them to stress and uncertainty at many points, they may not only tolerate but welcome the security of extreme fixity and changelessness elsewhere in their lives."[8] In speaking of the "Evolved Rural Church" Douglas also notes the role of the church as a bulwark against change. He points to some churches which date back to the time when the city was still a village and have never grown out of their early village attitudes. It is his observation that the extreme mobility of city churches is in part a struggle to maintain rural character. When urban problems have been thrust upon them in one locality, they have as often as not taken themselves off into some quiet residential section where they could cherish the earlier traditions of the countryside unchallenged.[9]

Thus we have the problem of "our" institution and the proper emphasis of loyalty in congregational life. There is always the danger that such loyalty will border on selfishness and exist at the expense of others. As old members

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8. Ibid., p. 315.
9. Douglas, 1000 City Churches, pp. 83-88.

away the struggle to maintain the organization becomes increasingly acute. Members who are still connected with the church and the neighborhood feel bitter toward the "intruders." Not only is it more difficult to finance the church, but the members may feel that they are in economic conflict with the incoming group on a secular level.[10] That is, they may see in them a threat to their jobs. Those who remain and who perhaps cannot move from the neighborhood may not only isolate themselves so far as possible from the intruders, but also resent the idea of having anything to do with them on a spiritual level, asserting that to encourage them is to depress land values still further. Thus the church becomes a community citadel, a place around which people cluster so that they can make a final stand against invasion; it is a bushel.

Hand in hand with the presence of economic conflict is the slightly more elusive but nevertheless real presence of the status factor in congregational life. A neighborhood serves as a badge of status in community esteem; the church serves the same purpose.[11] This attitude holds true

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10. Leiffer, op. cit., p. 218.
11. Ibid. Leiffer's study of church aims showed that one third of the churches existed without much reference to the general community interests and needs and reported: "One minister has stated the problem very frankly: 'We need to adapt our program to the needs of the 'unchurched' in this vicinity rather than to perpetuate the outmoded program of yesteryear. We are considered too much of a class church . . . The majority of the 'underpriviliged' and 'exploited' pass us by as having no message suited to their particular needs, etc.'" p.169.

for denominations and reflects itself in the local congregation. Although Protestant denominations in their total outreach touch nearly all sections of the population, individual Protestant churches tend to be "class churches," with members drawn principally from one class group. Even where membership cuts across class lines, control of the church and its policies is generally in the hands of officials drawn from one class, usually the middle class.[12] For added testimony from the Lynds: "As one business-class daughter of sixteen remarked: 'There are special cliques in high school according to what Sunday school you go to. This means mostly, though, kids like us. The poorer kids are separated off, no matter what church they go to.' The social emphasis of the most prominent of these Sunday-school classes, that in the Presbyterian church, is enhanced by such class affairs as stylishly appointed luncheons at the Country Club."[13]

It is doubtful that this problem of class structure and concern over the status factor will lose its intensity in the future. Liston Pope's article found little evidence that religion will operate in the near future to change American class structure appreciably. He reported that several opinion polls have shown ministers to be discontent with many aspects of social organization in this country and

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12. Liston Pope, "Religion and the Class Structure," in The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, (March, 1948), p. 89.
13. The Lynds, op. cit., p. 306.

that church leaders - of all faiths - are more concerned about racial patterns than ever before. (There is less concern about class lines than about race barriers.) Pope concluded his work: "But unless a drastic transformation comes about in the churches, they will probably continue for the most part to adapt class divisions - and even to intensify them - as they have done in the past."[14]

In addition to economic conflict and class distinction a population shift within a community may bring with it race conflict, and to a greater extent than in the past. Kincheloe's summary is typical:

> Very likely the local community will face more race-conflict problems in the future than it has in the past. Negro groups are becoming not only more self-conscious but filled with a determination to achieve a more adequate place for themselves and their children. The social and economic situation of the Negroes for the last few decades has been such as to produce almost inevitably the situation into which we now seem to be moving. Work and also wage discriminations, bad housing and high rents and also educational discriminations have caused the development of a spirit of conflict and cynicism. It is a question of how long the restrictions, real estate and occupational and social areas is to take place. The institution working in any local area may be under more race-conflict tension during the next twenty-five years than it has been during the past generation. Religious groups have often accentuated prejudices. On the other hand there is a tendency to break down barriers of race and class prejudice in line with basic religious teachings on brotherhood. Definite pronouncements on this topic were made in 1937 at the World Conference on Church, Community and State held at Oxford, England.[15]

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14. Pope, op. cit., p. 91.
15. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 18.

More official directives have followed since that Oxford meeting, and the end is not yet in sight. But eventually these directives must reach the local congregations which Mr. Kincheloe says may be under more conflict than ever before. Buell Gallagher attributes part of the present-day excitement over bi-racial churches to mission work done in the past. He tells of the "embarrassed people in the home churches" who sent out the missionary to preach the Gospel and practice brotherhood and ultimately discovered that this required that they do the same at home. He calls this crisis the "boomerang of mission."[16] Boomerang or not, racial and cultural reconciliation is a matter of responsibility[17] and an index to the length of congregational existence.[18]

Another problem in church discovering community is the

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16. Buell G. Gallagher, "Racism and Color Caste," in The Interseminary Series, Vol. I, Book 1, Clarence Tucker Craig, ed., p. 94.

17. Everett R. Clinchy, "The Effort of Organized Religion" in Controlling Group Prejudice: The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (March, 1946). "Religion is one of the fundaments in coping with prejudice. . . To omit the spiritual factor . . hampers advances by the other three." p. 128. (The "other three" approaches are instructing minds, conditioning emotions, and reconstructing folkways andmores.)

18. Leiffer, op. cit., "It should be frankly recognized that unless a church is ready to welcome foreign-language groups or Negroes to its activities and membership, it cannot hope to build itself permanently into the community in the lower-rent areas of the city. This problem of serving the local area is then closely tied to the social teachings and practices of the church, and its solution involves the attitudes of the denomination as well as those of the membership." p. 170.

function of the family in congregational life. If it is supposed that one family in a changing community should be neighborly and concerned with another family, some churches must first reverse their program in another aspect of selection. In the past there has been the appeal to the individual but little treatment of the family as a unit. The church has been carried along with urbanism's increased freedom and individualization of family members and their release from family ties.[19] Protestant-American churches have particularly addressed their appeals to individual members of the family. As a result, the concentrated effort of family in meeting new emergencies in a community has been negligible. However, Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches have made better use of family solidarity, although no church is without loss in this field of urbanism.[20]

A very human hurdle seems to be the presence of financial competition between individual congregations. The heightened mobility rate of city peoples tends to increase rather than diminish the tension between early churches and the newer, outlying congregations. Both types seem to need people who can contribute. And the central churches, as they lose members, are all the more tempted to adhere strictly to a selective policy such as the one outlined earlier in this paper. When they see that they cannot continue they then

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19. Ernest W. Burgess, op. cit., p. 419.
20. Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 63.

decide to move out further. Hertwig summarizes the situation: "The youngsters are building and buying all sorts of things which the grandmother church could never afford. Do you blame her for catching the wanderlust in spite of her old age?"[21]

In conclusion, the material brought to the writer's attention seemed to indicate that the church has many barriers to break down before it can discover and identify itself with the community. The presence of the church in a residential area means that its responsibility concerning its message of salvation has geographical connotations. To meet this responsibility the church - and that means the people in it - must solve the following problems: They must not turn their church into another urban institution which has no relation to its surroundings; it must own a claim for existence other than that people of a certain sort have chosen to transport themselves to it. The church must beware of the danger of becoming a bulwark against change instead of a source of Christian life for the people in it and about it. It must face the interference of materialistic desires, class distinctions, and typical urban indifference to the needs of one's neighborhood companions. This is necessary because the location of churches throughout a city means little if some of those churches are not actually identifying themselves with their communities.

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21. Hertwig, op. cit., p. 7.

IX. Conclusion: Methods of Identifying the Church with the Changing Community

Murray Leiffer holds that no other institution in our society is so well equipped to interpret the problems, needs and viewpoints of various groups, each to the other, as the Christian church.[1] But to utilize its many gifts the minister must "know his people as well as he knows his theology, to comprehend the social problems of the community with as much insight as he does the heavenly city described in Revelation. If the experiences recorded in the Bible are to be more than an idle tale, the minister must see that which is common to them and to the struggles, the disorganization, the hopes and fears expressed in the people about them."[2]

The acquiring of such information and its use are very much like the assembling of the parts of a jig-saw puzzle. In a study of the community, however, one cannot expect to secure all of the pieces complete in a box; rather, it is necessary to ferret them out one at a time. No minister can grow into a community in a short period of time. And while he is there, he will wonder how much time should be devoted to such compilation of statistics and data. Leiffer answers the question by saying that "Maps, charts, and graphs,

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1. Leiffer, op. cit., pp. 259-260.
2. Ibid., p. 260.

while they do not make the successful pastor, are valuable tools in the hands of a skilled leader."[3] A method for discovering the relationship between the age distribution in a church's population compared to that of the community is to utilize a "Population Pyramid," a chart which the United States Census Bureau employs in making demographic surveys. Leiffer suggests its use and states that it is available to any church.[4]

After examining the nature of the community and the direction in which it appears to be going, what is the next step if selectivity is not true identification with the community? The writer previously referred to one such method: a dual constituency. In such a procedure, when the two constituencies which make up the congregation's population are socially distinct, the two classes simply use the same building. There is one staff and one budget, but the people attend services at different hours and usually belong to separate organizations. The hope is that gradually through the years the two constituencies will tend to fuse and to develop a new and broader basis of fellowship.[5] However, it seems to the writer that the development of fellowship on such a basis would still be under severe handicaps. It would furthermore be very likely that the "lesser" of the two groups would not respond in appreciation to such

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3. Ibid., p. 263.
4. Ibid., p. 264.
5. Douglas, 1000 City Churches, p. 185.

a program. The problem of "caste and class" might still be in full force, and the writer would again refer to pages 25-26 of this paper. Perhaps it should also be brought to the attention of the reader that the reference books referring to such a procedure were written in the 1920's. The writer did not find any reports on success or further suggestions in works written a decade or more later. Nevertheless, it may be conceded that in some instances this may be the logical first step in identifying church with community. Ideally, however, it is the assumption of this paper that the student of the community will recognize the beginnings of change before a dual constituency is the necessary solution. It is repeated: this is assuming the ideal.

All the studies brought to the attention of the writer further assumed that as a community changed, subsidization of the present church would be inevitable. This is assumed because of the maxim that progresive churches are found in progressive communities and vice versa.[6] However, Lang's survey also discovered that one congregation consistently ran counter to this theory, although the others conformed.[7] Perhaps, then, outside help is not as absolute a necessity as it might seem. This thought is not interjected to write off the need for subsidization, but merely to point out that eagerness to subsidize may indicate a premature notion

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6. Lang, op. cit., p. 6.
7. Ibid., p. 64.

that a church cannot be properly identified with its community.

Subsidization in its final and most complete stage would result in an institutional church, that is, a community center.[8] However, the writer feels that this type of religious institution is present in those communities which long ago came under adverse environmental conditions and therefore requires separate consideration. The purpose of this paper is to more or less limit the discussion to areas where changes are taking place and where members of the church are for the most part also members of the community, members who might be wondering what to do and think about newly arrived neighbors. Such methods as dual constituencies or dependence on members from outlying districts to finance the mission work of a paid member of the congregation, while perhaps absolutely necessary, may still be a presentation of religion as the businesslike approach of professionals. And the lack of people appealing to and reaching other people was one of the factors which led to weakness in the first place.[9]

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8. Cf., Leiffer, op. cit., p. 259ff. and Kincheloe, op. cit., p. 108ff.

9. The writer has quoted Hertwig a number of times. Perhaps this would be a suitable place to comment on some of the impressions gained from that article. Hertwig's purpose was of the highest and most sincere type: to keep the Gospel in needy areas. However, some of his statements seem to betray the influence of regarding the church as too much of an institution. His reasons on why a church can remain might carry weight for the possibility of continued existence for the central church in a downtown location. But those same reasons have proved ineffective for the church in a deterior-

Again, the answer to the stigma of professionalism would not be to remove all professional workers. Leiffer has a concise and favorable review of work which is necessarily on a professional level:

> Many of the most effective churches, however, perform additional functions. They recognize a responsibility to establish valid goals for community as well as personal action, work for the elimination of disorganizing and debasing influences within the city, and encourage their members to accept responsibility in local philanthropic and social service organizations. . .
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> Therefore it may operate clinics, raise a milk fund, distribute clothing, offer legal aid, provide a life adjustment center or the services of a personal counselor. . . It helps them to see that all persons are related by a social and economic nexus, if not by blood, and that the good life which the church advocates cannot be divorced from these problems of society. To carry forward this phase of its problem, it may organize a forum, perhaps in connection with a church night series, where under skilled and informed leadership people may ask questions, express their own points of view, and register intellectual and social growth.[10]

Even this picture of the church at work, it should be

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ating residential area. The statement about coming "superways" reflects the urban practice of travelling to a chosen institution, but it does not mean that the travellers will be doing much witnessing, either in their own neighborhood or in that of the church. To speak of a congregation as having excusable "wanderlust" also points to the problem and threat of institutionalism. It indicates the extent to which most congregations have been separated from community-mindedness. If there were a church-community relationship, there would be no wandering. Finally, there is the prediction that the area won't always be so bad but will be improved. To hold out such a hope to a congregation is not at all relating the church to current changes. Furthermore, on the basis of sociological surveys, the writer doubts - in the case of most churches - that subsidization, appeals to loyalty, better transportaion, and energetic selectivity will enable the church to last that long.

10. Leiffer, op. cit., p. 253.

noted, includes an emphasis on making people conscious of their place in society and their relationship to others. In any event, the work of conditioning people to meet the problems cited in the conclusion of Chapter Eight must progress at every level of congregational life. To cite one example, that process goes on consciously or unwittingly in every Sunday school class every week. Children absorb their teachers' concern for all people or lack of concern. The tone of voice, the sarcasm, the lift of the eyebrow, the kind of humor, are as potent instruction as uttered words. Group meetings and individual counselling can at every age level set up goals for the fixing of feelings with specified targets. And reduced to simplest forms, those targets will be the real, live people whom church members meet. Obviously, it would be as illogical to "love" whole groups as it would be to generalize and "hate" entire groups.

By means of such efforts perhaps the problems of institutionalism, family disorganization, materialism, class distinction and downright indifference can be met. At any rate, it would seem to the writer that the function of the congregation would include the use of every means of community interpretation at the disposal of a Christian. It would seem that it is the church's function to reawaken the urbanite's sense of responsibility towards the next urbanite so

that congregational life, from its beginning and thereafter, is concerned with local community life.

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