

Leaders Of Past Years Here For Westminster Anniversary

..BY ELISABETH QUINBY

The atomic age was blacked out for almost four hours last night as Westminster Presbyterian church celebrated its 75th anniversary.

"Here is Jesus Christ — let us together do all we can for Him," was the underlying celebration theme.

And since Jesus Christ was Himself a happy man, the celebration was as gaiety itself.

Lower Kauke Hall was filled with Westminster church's unusual congregation combination: a solid, enduring nucleus of townfolk, and as important "transient" membership, the many students of the College of Wooster who belong to the church.

"A church college is also a community," Dr. Howard F. Lowry, resident of the College of Wooster, told the crowd. "This campus could be so poor without Westminster church that its poverty would be great indeed.

"OUR STUDENTS go to practically every church in Wooster — but to have a real church home here on the campus is something for which this college can never be too grateful."

The Rev. Curtis R. Douglass, who was minister of Westminster church during the troubled 1929-1944 period, gave the chief address.

"I felt very much at home in Wooster after my third Sunday here," Mr. Douglass said. "There was only a curtain between organist Neill O. Rowe and me, and on his Sunday Mr. Rowe punched me through the curtain. 'Take plenty of time talking to the Lord,' he whispered. 'I have to go inside the console.'"

The Rev. Mr. Douglass, now minister of the First Presbyterian church in Fairfield, Iowa, spoke of the gracious heritage of the congregation of Westminster church.

"There are some men who cannot look comfortably into the past, because they can not see clearly a fixed point of orientation in the past," he said, quoting from the current best-seller "The Mudlark."

"This church has a great heritage in people: some of these are part of my own inheritance. There were Dr. George Luccock. . . Matthew H. Frank. . . Miss Gertrude Finrich. . . Coach L. C. Boles. . . Dean William R. Westhafer. . . Dr. Louis E. Holden. . . Dr. H. N. Mateer (who was disappointed in me because I could not learn how to play roque). . . Dr. and Mrs. J. G. Williams. . . Dr. Elias Compton. . . Dr. Philip C. McDowell. . . Dr. and Mrs. J. G. Black. . . Mrs. George Heisler. . . Dr. and Mrs. Chalmers Martin (I once heard a raddy say Martin could say 'shucks' with more expression than other men could swear). . . W. Z. Morrison (a misunderstood man: he was happiest when he seemed to be growling). . . and many many others.

though our church were a bridge between the town and the college. A bridge, to be of value, must be open at both ends — and Dr. Lowry has kept his end of the bridge open, and has paved the approach.

"Our church and Westminster church function as one church during the summer. We cooperate: there is only one work to be done. If the church is the body of Christ, then these two are the right and left hands.

"I cherish the friendship of John Bates, and admire his wife for her genuineness. Under this kind of leadership, your 'mother' is proud of you."

TO DR. WISHART fell the unusual task of introducing himself and his brief talk, "A Little Bit of History."

Westminster church was founded only nine years after the Civil War, Dr. Wishart noted. The country was in turmoil, with the "inept administration" of President Grant, and with the great panic which swept across the land.

"Yet Wooster seemed like a little oasis in this desert. Salaries here were microscopic — but so were expenses. There were 7,000 people in Wooster, plenty of mud, and the college was one mile from the square," Dr. Wishart said.

"On May 10, 1874, a committee composed of three ministers and one elder organized this second Presbyterian church in Wooster.

"This church is distinguished, among other things, for never having held evening services. Services were inaugurated in the last century, but it was August — and they evaporated in the humidity.

"I came here three years after the Rev. George Luccock had been here (as college pastor). Luccock was a rare and radiant combination. He loved a joke on himself. He was especially fond of telling about the little deaf lady in Chicago who complained that she couldn't hear his sermons.

"You aren't missing much," Dr. Luccock told her. "That's what they all say," she said. George loved that. . .

"GEORGE ALSO loved baseball. One Sunday afternoon when he was listening to a world series game, his wife — who had a true New England conscience — came in. 'George! What are you doing?' 'I'm just trying to find a church service,' he said — hastily turning the dial.

"Mr. Douglass was here during the tragic period of 1929-1944; and now we have the Rev. C. John L. Bates. I hope our estimate of him

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"THE WORLD is full of people with heavy loads. The inward load grows heavier and heavier. But those who are our inheritance carried burdens — but out of those burdens they made wings.

"We share together a gracious heritage. Let us lay aside the weights that weight us down. It is the non-essentials of life that burden us most, and these unnecessary burdens of life are sins.

"Let us go on from strength to strength."

The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Wishart, president emeritus of the College of Wooster, was last night's master of ceremonies.

Special guests introduced were: the Rev. Arthur Romig, of Lima, moderator of the Synod of Ohio, and Mrs. Romig; Dr. E. W. Lodwick, stated clerk of the Synod, and Mrs. Lodwick; Dr. Walker, general presbyter; Dr. John R. Williams, of the First Presbyterian church of Wooster, and Mrs. Williams; the Rev. Robert Tuck, of the Wooster Church of Christ, representing the ministers of Wooster, and Mrs. Tuck; and Mrs. F. N. Jessup, representing the presbyterial.

"All but 11 of the original 36 members of Westminster church were transfers from the First church," noted "Prexy" Wishart, in introducing Dr. John R. Williams.

"We of the First church feel as

will not be circulated too widely among other churches who are looking for a pastor.

"May we ever retain a granite roadbed while we move on, adapting ourselves along the way."

Mrs. John W. Olthouse presented a brief sketch of the history of the women of the church.

"Our 50th anniversary marked the end of a period when we had only one missionary society. In 1925 the Anne Hart Auxiliary was founded. Only in the past year have the two societies been united. It is fitting that this union was effected in our 75th year," Mrs. Olthouse said.

AMONG ACHIEVEMENTS of the women of the church, Mrs. Olthouse listed the establishing of permanent homes for furloughing missionaries here, the building of the Henderson apartments for missionaries, and the assistance to a French family during the war years.

Numerous outstanding women members were mentioned in Mrs. Olthouse's brief talk, including Mrs. Elias Compton — who is still remembered by the society for her observation: "It is not so hard to pray as it seems. We have only to talk with Him."

Mrs. H. N. Mateer, with 61 years of service in the Westminster Missionary society, and Mrs. M. H. Frank, with 59 years of service were particularly honored in the feminine view of church history.

Six members of the church were named by the Rev. C. John L. Bates as the "oldest" living members. They are: Mrs. H. N. Mateer who became a member on October 2, 1889; Thomas Flattery, January 14, 1891; Olive Fern Kieffer, 1891; Mrs. Thomas Flattery, May 13, 1900; Mrs. M. H. Frank, October 7, 1900; and Prof. Lyman C. Knight February 9, 1901.

A number of congratulatory messages — including one from Dr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Compton — were received from former members and friends of Westminster church.

The committee who planned the 75th anniversary dinner include Dr. U. L. Mackey, Dr. William J. Hail, Mrs. M. H. Frank, Dr. William I. Schreiber, Mrs. C. John L. Bates, and Mrs. Philip C. McDowell.