

Harold Bend Sedgwick

ON THE RESIGNATION OF MR. METTERS, THE VESTRY DESIGNATED Mr. Siegenthaler as Priest-in-charge. He, with the able and loyal staff, in consultation with the Senior Warden, carried Emmanuel through eight difficult months until the new Rector arrived. A Parish Committee was formed to maintain an active program to hold the Parish together, and to keep members from drifting away during the interim. Bishop Nash was with us for eight Sundays, which greatly helped our morale.

It was good news indeed when the Vestry announced the election of the Rev. Harold Bend Sedgwick as Emmanuel's next Rector, taking up his new duties on May 15. The Parish welcomed him warmly, and even before the summer recess, he set himself to the task of learning the ropes and visiting his parishioners.

Instead of the Rectory at 10 Chestnut Street, he selected a cooperative apartment at 388 Beacon Street, which offered him an extra room for a study, and shelves for his books. So the old house was sold, and the apartment bought as the seventh Rectory in one hundred years.

Harold Bend Sedgwick was born February 13, 1908, in St. Paul, Minnesota, the son of a clergyman of the Episcopal Church, Theodore Sedgwick, and Mary Aspinwall Bend. From Phillips Exeter he went to Harvard, graduating in 1930. Thereafter he was two years in Rome where his father was Rector of St. Paul's American Church, before returning to the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge from which he graduated in 1935.

On leaving the Seminary he spent three years as assistant minister at Christ Church, Cambridge, and much of his work took him back to the dormitories of the Harvard Yard and to the quadrangles of the new Harvard Houses. In 1938 he was called to his first Parish, All Saints' Church in Brookline. He remained there nine years before moving to St. Thomas' Church in Washington, D. C., for another nine happy and adventurous years.

It is possible that Mr. Sedgwick's love for New England lent some influence in bringing him back to Boston and to Emmanuel. He has known personally five of his predecessors at Emmanuel; even Dr. Parks was still preaching to crowded congregations in New York when he was a boy in Gramercy Park. And during his college days he often dropped into Emmanuel to sit at the feet of Dr. Worcester and Dr. Washburn.

It is certain that Mr. Sedgwick will never cease to work for a return of those happy and significant days of this Parish. Dr. Worcester once said of Deaconess Libby, "She worked as she breathed, apparently never stopping" and Harold Sedgwick has never stopped "working" since he arrived back in Boston. He was formally instituted by Bishop Stokes as the eighth Rector of Emmanuel on October 6.

Presiding Bishop Sherrill, in his opening address at the last General Convention in Miami, seemed almost to be speaking for the Rector when he said, "I am inclined to believe that without lessening in any way the significance of the Church, we must stress an equally vital and even more primary aspect of the Gospel, namely, the personal confrontation of the individual with the living Christ ——. Whatever else the Church may be, at the best the Church is the fellowship of those who in some way have been with Jesus. Here is the basis of Evangelism."

"Fellowship" is an oft used word with the Rector, and with intent. It is at the heart of his pastoral ministry. He is sure that bringing people together within the church in a democratic way is the need of the day and the need of Emmanuel. This fellow-

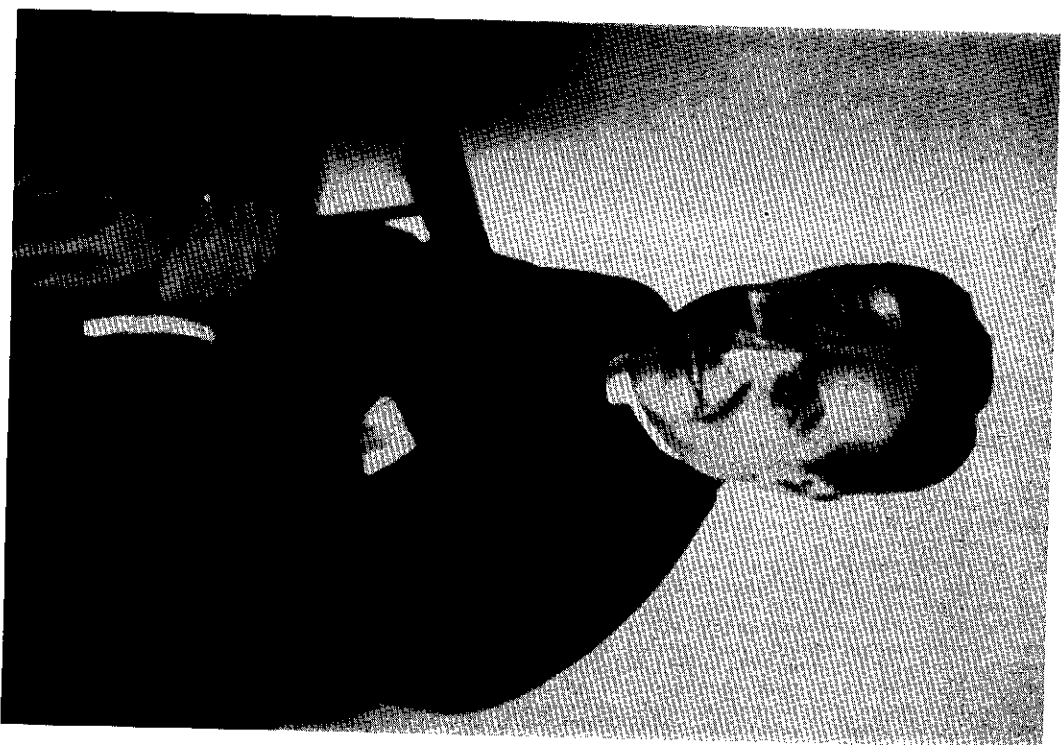
ship is distinct from the ceremonial and preaching aspect which he bases on the Evangelical tradition — that of low churchmanship. This fellowship is a means of combating loneliness, and the lonely person is one of his major concerns.

Mr. Sedgwick reasons that lone individuals, detached from family and home — and how many thousands there are of them in the apartments and cut up houses in the Back Bay — must be made to feel that they belong to a corporate body which is the church. The church must provide an atmosphere of Christian fellowship in which these lone individuals can have the stimulation of group participation and a sense of belonging. Moreover, the church is not a building — but people — “a fellowship of those who have been with Jesus”. This would seem to be the purpose for which the Rector gives so much of himself, to bring the living Christ into the lives of his people that they may together build a warm and vibrant fellowship within Emmanuel.

One feels the Rector is pressed for time — it must not be tomorrow that this blessing comes to Emmanuel, it must be today. “It is later than you think!” He wants us to hurry — not to plod — towards the goal; perhaps we have the habit of plodding.

The whole program for the church year is educational as well as inspirational. Each season is explained, every lesson, hymn, and sermon is tied into it with infinite thought. He began early in his ministry to open the confirmation classes to everyone, and his erudite elucidations of the Bible, the Prayer-book, the Creeds, etc., are absorbing and provocative. Another educational event is his “Question Box”, a part of his so-called “Four-Fold Program” during Wednesday evenings in Lent. Beginning with a half-hour of organ music, followed by a Vesper Service, — on to a delicious dinner with a “community sing”, and ending with an hour of the “Question Box” where people may write in their perplexities and quandaries, and be skillfully and clearly answered by the Rector.

But this factual data does not tell the story of the Lenten



The Rev. Harold Bend Sedgwick
1957 -

Four-Fold Program. Beginning with a small group on the opening Wednesday, the attendance grows week by week until the last evening, when the capacity of our dining room has been reached. What is happening that more and more people want to come? As we depart it is evident there are many who have felt the warmth, the friendship, the common "excitement" of the evening, and we go forth with a sense of security in this common "fellowship".

The Rector tells of one woman who, as a result of his saying in a sermon that the Christian life was exciting, asked how she might find this excitement. After one of these Four-Fold Evenings she confessed, "The Program last night was thrilling, it *did* something to us."

Yes — there is "something" in the air — can we define it? Not yet perhaps, but we surely know it's different, it's happier, it's more secure. "Something" is happening in Emmanuel.

The Sunday coffee hour has become an increasingly friendly time which many look forward to after morning service, and it gives the Rector an opportunity to greet newcomers. The Young, with no place to go for lunch, gather and have a Dutch treat luncheon nearby, and the "Young Adults" meet Sunday evenings for a program of talks, discussions, and refreshments, with one of the assistant clergy.

The Rector, with his two assistants, the Rev. Rollin J. Fairbanks, D.D., and the Rev. Don H. Gross, has established a Sunday Evening Healing Service at six o'clock. This is the aftermath of Dr. Alfred W. Price's three day mission at Emmanuel in October, which resulted in many requests for a service, with emphasis on Christian Healing. Dr. Price's mission was packed at the opening Sunday evening service, and three hundred people went to the altar for the "laying on of hands", and through the following days hundreds of troubled and sick found comfort here.

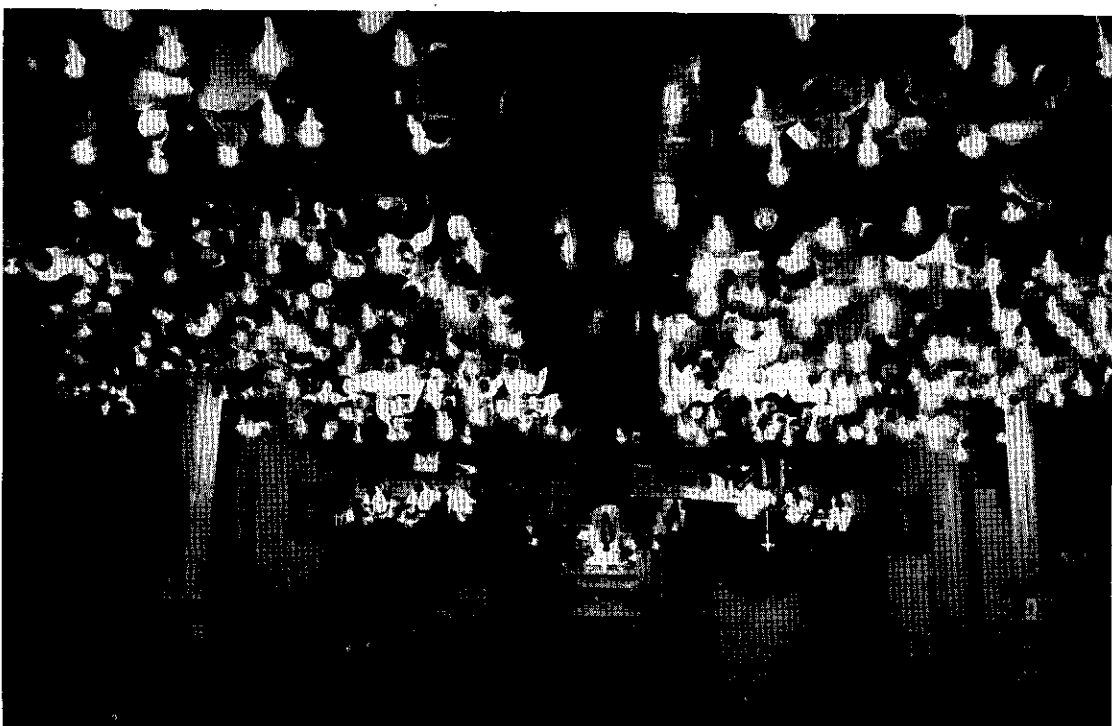
But the Rector has another purpose for these Sunday evening services. Like Dr. Worcester, Dr. Osgood, and Mr. Metters before him, he constantly urges the "church-going habit". He

believes the basic rock on which Emmanuel can build is the faithful congregation who feel church is a Sunday "must". Weekends in the country are a modern habit which will be hard to break, and in building a Sunday evening service, the Rector hopes to see the weekender returning in time for worship. Also, he is sure that there are some people who, as in the days of our grandparents, enjoy coming to church twice on Sundays.

Every church has a festival service on Christmas and Easter, and they are always beautifully decorated, — but our Rector not only stresses these two seasons with outstanding beauty, but many other significant days throughout the year are "Special", or "Festival" days when the church is appropriately and charmingly decorated and the music especially joyous. On Whitsunday, for instance, "when Christ has promised the Power of His Spirit to all who are ready to receive it," the chancel is filled with flowering shrubs and spring flowers. Without doubt the Harvest Home Service on Thanksgiving Day is unique with its beautiful della Robbia design of fruited garlands, the colorful fruit and vegetables piled high on the chancel steps, and symbolic wheat and grapes on the Altar. The service itself all tuned into meaningful praise and Thanksgiving is a memorable day for Emmanuel's people. To all such details the Rector gives meticulous thought and participation, having real personal pleasure in expressing his great love of beauty and color.

That these services have a depth, beauty and a surge of The Spirit seems attested by Miss Ellen Parks, daughter of our third rector, Leighton Parks, who was at Emmanuel during last Easter Services. She writes, "I cannot leave for England without telling you how beautiful your Holy Week services have been and the glorious Easter Service this morning. It makes me happy to have you in what was once father's pulpit — I suddenly thought of something Bishop Brooks said to Father when I was little, speaking of some clergyman, 'Parks, he's one of us!' So are you — bless you!"

Emmanuel Church Centennial — January 10, 1960
Candlelighting Service



The Women's Church Service League continues its many and varied activities each Thursday, now designated as "Parish Day". This is definitely Emmanuel's day for many of our workers. They may function in the basement, pressing surplices, wrapping books; in the workroom, sewing for missions and making surgical dressings for the Red Cross; or in the sacristy, cleaning silver, — but all meet at 12:30 for luncheon. Here we always find our Rector, and after a deliciously prepared lunch for which we make a token payment of thirty-five cents, we have a few words from him, and celebrate a few birthdays.

We hear from the Rector on many other occasions. He recounts delightfully of his summer vacation which starts with a sea voyage to some foreign land — and we all benefit from it on his return in the autumn. He also is of professional calibre as a reader and a book reviewer, so at Christmas and on other beginnings or endings of our programs, he will entertain us and give us much pleasure with appropriate selections. All this is, of course, outside of his spiritual leadership, but definitely contributes to his "fellowship" building.

It can easily be seen the Rector keeps at the task of bringing his parishioners together for "fellowship" in church services, meetings, suppers, lectures, etc., "Specials" and "Festivals", morning, noon and night. It will not be his fault if we are not all stepping out to the church with enthusiasm every night in the week! He will love it and survive it — it is his life. Perhaps it is fortunate he is a bachelor, but we sometimes wonder, will we, who have manifold responsibilities and duties outside the church, be able to keep up with him?

In one of his Sunday leaflets the Rector reflects on a comment of the Rev. Dr. William Rainford, once of St. George's Church in New York. He felt it important for himself, his senior warden (who, at that time, was Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan) and the ushers to greet and welcome at the church door, not only the strangers, but those the Rector had visited, — "Thus it wrought a change in the inside temperature of the old

church." This is definitely the philosophy of the Rector and the "temperature" of Emmanuel is surely warming. But the difficulty is to hold the strangers when once they come; only when they feel they "belong" are we sure they will remain with us.

Crover J. Oberle, our organist for thirteen years, resigned in September 1958 to accept a similar position at Christ and St. Luke's Church in Norfolk, Virginia. He is missed, not only because of his musicianship, but also because he was a charming and gentle person everyone liked to have about. Mr. Lloyd Palmer, for fourteen years organist at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Dedham, is now our able organist.

Not to be forgotten is the final conquering of the acoustical problem of the church. This was thoroughly studied because for years some had found it difficult to hear. It rather exasperated the Rector, as he had always been heard elsewhere, and he retaliated by saying, "You can't hear me, and I can assure you, I can't hear you! Your responses in the service are barely audible, and your singing is unbelievably thin. Let's all speak up together." A newly installed public address system is now working successfully.

Emmanuel, because it is in the center of a city block and has no identifying tower, is sometimes lost on the hurrying passerby, but now with its new floodlighting, the row of open doors, from eight in the morning until six p.m., a church sign at the corner of Arlington Street, our beautiful garden, given and cared for by Miss Margaret Emery, all give an invitation to enter.

The Vestry minutes remain the same spare records as of yore, with even fewer "votes". There was a time in Dr. Parks' day when he was reproved for some slight initiative on his part, which had not been approved by a vote of the Vestry. Happily, those days are past, and it is strongly suspected that today, save for the excellent management of the church monies, it is the Rector who leads the Vestry. Certainly they come to church more often, as do we all.

They can see the "temperature" warming, the church filling,

more members participating in the Every Member Canvass, pledges mounting, the Diocesan Quota met for a second consecutive year (no longer "delinquent" as Dr. Worcester called it), the budget for 1960 covered, and even a contingency fund set aside "in case the north wall falls." (Would it but make up its mind!) What a joyful occasion was our last annual meeting on January 26, when all this good news was reported by an elated Rector, Senior Warden, and Vestry. What a time for thanksgiving, if Emmanuel can now begin to look to a future which includes once more, as of yesteryear, projects of Christian Service outside of our church—for others, not for ourselves. We shall enrich our faith and warm our lives thereby.

* With new hopes stirring and old resolutions reborn, with a gospel of forgiveness, redemption and assurance being preached, with a quickening, contagious Spirit kindled in our Parish, and a warm, growing "fellowship" wrapping itself around us, then surely, with our Rector, who has brought all this to pass, we may in this centennial year repeat the sermon text used at Emmanuel's consecration one hundred years ago from Haggai 2:9. "And the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."