

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

United Methodist Church

Personal Experience

O. H. 973

OLIVE V. FREEMAN

Interviewed

by

Patricia Beckwith

on

October 28, 1977

OLIVE V. FREEMAN

Olive Vivian Spencer was born to Lester and Jessie Spencer on September, 1915, in Denmark, Ohio. The Spencer family moved to Dorset. There she attended school and graduated from Dorset High School in 1933.

Olive became the wife of Albert W. Freeman, who was born on December 31, 1910. They have three children - Jonathan, Jane, and Avalyn.

Mrs. Freeman belongs to the Dorset United Methodist Church, where she serves as lay leader. Her hobbies include working with handicapped children, reading, and television.

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INTERVIEWEE: OLIVE V. FREEMAN
INTERVIEWER: Patricia Beckwith
SUBJECT: Past minister; youth; lay leadership; problems
DATE: October 28, 1977

B: This is an interview with Olive V. Freeman for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on United Methodist Church, by Patricia Beckwith, on October 28, 1977, at 3352 Mells Road, Dorset, Ohio, at 2:05 p.m.

One of the first things we try to find out is where you were born and about your early schooling?

F: I was born in Denmark, Ohio just five miles north of Dorset. I started school in a one-room schoolhouse. Because I had to walk two miles I quit and my mother taught me the first year. The next year I came to Dorset.

B: What made your family move to Dorset?

F: They moved to a farmhouse outside of Dorset. Then, I started into the first grade again. Then, I went the rest of the time. . . I may have gone into the second grade that same year, I'm not sure, but I went all the rest of the time to Dorset and graduated.

B: What are some of your special memories about your school? Were there any special teachers that stand out to you?

F: Yes, the one that I had in high school was William McConnell. He was very interested in dramatics, and that was one of my main interests too. I loved plays.

B: Do you credit him with any special inspirations?

F: I'm not sure, but I remember one of his special sayings was, "If I could teach just one of you to think for yourself, I would feel like I've been a success." I'm not sure that he ever did.

B: What drew your parents to Dorset? Was the farm the main purpose of them coming?

F: No, the farm that they were on, they rented. Then, they worked in the lumber mill for John Spencer and his father. That was located, they had a job down on 193 called the Russell job and different work around, so that Dorset was the central point. Then, my dad started to work for the railroad. So, he worked out of Dorset.

B: So there were a lot of different attractions?

F: It was probably employment more than anything else.

B: Do you have any memories of how you and your family lived during the Depression?

F: Vividly, because my father lost his job on the railroad, as a lot of them did, and the only thing that we had was the telephone office. It was twenty-four hour a day job. You were there twenty-four hours because you had to answer it. My mother did, and I helped her with that, but I remember at the time they were paid \$40 a month for twenty-four hours a day of the week. That was an experience too.

B: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

F: Two, one brother and one sister.

B: That wasn't as bad as some families, right?

F: We never went hungry. We did without a lot of things and we didn't have any luxury, but we always had food. I think living outside in a rural area made a lot of difference that way because we had gardens and we canned food so we never were in a soup line or anything like that. I think it was more difficult for the people in the city than it was for us.

B: When did you or your family first start going to church?

F: Well, my first memories of the Methodist Church are when

I was in the second grade and we had a school play that we were going to give the program in the Methodist Church. Normally I didn't go to the Methodist Church, but Miss Furber, my second grade teacher, who was a Baptist but who lived right close to the church, said that if I could go to the program I could stay all night with her. So, I went to the program and I know I envied the kids that were in the habit of going to Sunday School over there because everything was so familiar to them and so strange to me. So, that's about the first memory I have of it. I was probably about ten or twelve when I started going to Sunday School.

B: What attracted your family to the church?

F: Well, my mother was a member of the South Denmark Church and when they closed that up they put the membership down here to this church, so she was a member. We always went to Sunday School.

B: What are your earliest memories about the Sunday School classes that you attended?

F: I think, perhaps, I don't remember too much about them until I was in high school and we had a high school teacher by the name of Beth Sevein, she was a Latin teacher. Later on, she went on to be a missionary in Africa, but while she was here she taught our Sunday School class. I remember the class and she was an excellent teacher. We used to argue sometimes just to argue the point, not because it was a real argument. We just wanted to get a lively discussion in the class, so we sort of took sides.

B: Was she well liked and well respected by a lot of people in the church?

F: Oh yes.

B: Was she an enthusiastic teacher?

F: Yes, she was such a good person that she really cared about the kids and she was the basketball coach. She wasn't a typical coach kind of person either because she was so fair about everything. She really didn't do too much yelling at you or anything.

B: Did you have an active youth group at the time of your high school years?

- F: I think, at least, a part of the time we did.
- B: Did you have parties, or some kind of activities?
- F: Well, it's hard to remember whether it was the Sunday School group or a school group when we had the parties. I know we used to have parties and taffy pulls.
- B: When you were in high school do you remember any of the men's activities? Did they have a men's Sunday School group or a men's fellowship group?
- F: I'm sure that they did, if not when I was in high school, it was just about directly afterwards. I know it was when Reverend Nuzem was there. I think it might have been. They had a very active men's group and they had fish fries and dinners. Bill Kyle was the main chef and all of the rest of the men helped and they really did a lot. Also, when there was anything to be done in the church they'd gather in there and donate things and do a lot of work in the church.
- B: Did they have these dinners to raise money for the church or as a fellowship-type thing?
- F: I think it may have been, somewhat, for both. I think sometimes they just had them for their own pleasure and other times I think they held them to raise money for the church.
- B: At this time, do you think the church was more evangelistic in nature than it is today?
- F: Well, certainly in a different way, at least, because they would have revival meetings and there were people that would go out and canvass. They would ask people if they were a Christian and things like that. You don't run into that as much now as you would then. My recollections are a little mixed up because I had grandparents who were very fundamental and very religious. We had that all the time at home with them, but there were people who were just as alive that way.
- B: Did they have prayer meetings and Sunday evening services?
- F: I think they did, it may not have been every year or consistently, but I remember at times they had Sunday night services. As a matter of fact, we used to have what was called Epworth League on Sunday evenings before church service sometimes.

B: What did this group do?

F: It was a youth group and we studied certain courses, as well as we had some parties and some socials. But, it was really for study purposes.

B: Do you remember when there were the four churches together?

F: No, I don't go back that far. I can remember Cherry Valley, Dorset, and Richmond.

B: How did a minister lead three churches?

F: Well, I know Don Sulliman preached in Dorset, went to Cherry Valley, and then usually had a church service in Richmond on Sunday night. Richmond didn't have a morning service until they divided it and just had Dorset and Richmond.

B: How did they make time for all the meetings that the churches had?

F: I don't think they had quite as much red tape that way they do now. Maybe, it's just because I wasn't personally involved in a lot of that, but I don't recall that they had as many church meetings. It could be that I just wasn't on the official board or whatever it was at the time. I wasn't as aware of it.

B: I was thinking, if they had three churches they would probably eliminate as much as they could.

F: Yes, they didn't have too many meetings together, either. I suppose at the Quarterly Conferences, they did, because that really wouldn't have changed. Sometimes, when we'd have the district superintendent, we'd have a church service and he'd stay for lunch and then we'd have a meeting afterwards. I can remember, at one time, that they had it that way.

B: At this time, when there was more evangelism, do you think it was a stronger concern for people to think more about tithing?

F: I'm not sure about that. I think money went further in those days, certainly we didn't pay out as much. Our church budget couldn't have been anywhere near as huge as it is now. I don't know, I always heard about tithing, but we didn't have that much. Even if we

tithed it would amount to that much because in those days it was during the Depression. So, I'm not sure whether they did or not.

B: What are some of your memories about the women's groups you used to have?

F: Well, I can remember that we always had a bazaar. They always served a big dinner besides that. They would have committees and there would be some that would do sewing and some would have baking and candy making. It was quite a thing. That was one of their biggest items during the year and it would bring in quite a lot of money. Then, I think we probably had a dinner almost every month.

B: What are some of your memories about working on the committees?

F: I don't think I got into that as much then. I remember my mother, and that when they had a bazaar, they had several different dishes that they'd have to take. A little later on when we had dinners we decided that it was better to make just a whole lot of one thing rather than to try to make salads and pies and things. We divided it up that way. That way we changed a little bit.

B: Were all of these dinners open to the public?

F: I think so, to raise money we'd put a bowl on the table for donations.

B: Were there any special projects that these were held for?

F: I think that was the main thing, just to help out the church. I know that the women's society or the ladies aid for years paid the janitor and they paid the taxes. I think the women's society still does that. They also paid the electric and some of those things. At this time they can't because they don't make enough.

B: Throughout your years here, what do you think the relationship has been between the church and the community?

F: I think the church and the schools were fairly close, for the most part, unless you would just happen to find a minister and a superintendent who were kind of at

odds. For the most part there was quite a close relationship until they consolidated the schools. Then, you get a different attitude. They don't stop to consider each other and their activities as much.

B: What about the community as a whole, like between the two churches?

F: I think the feeling right now, between the two churches, is very close. They seem to think a lot of each other. They are able to work together. I'm sure not sure that it was always that close, but I don't think there was ever any great emnity. Right now, I think it's a very good feeling between the two churches.

B: Especially the Bible school is like that.

F: Yes. The leader of Bible school this year was just amazed at the way the two churches could go ahead and have a common Bible school. I guess it isn't the same everyplace.

B: What do you see as the real power of the church, who had the last say, the congregation or the minister?

F: As of now, I would say it's quite evenly divided. I have known ministers that were here and very definitely felt that they should have the last say or maybe the only say sometimes. It seems, to me, that whichever originates that idea usually they go along or they don't go along.

B: Do you think that relationship changes with each minister?

F: Well, somewhat because some of us aren't as flexible as that.

B: What do you feel about the Methodist Church's custom of using ministers for only two or three years?

F: I think they even feel that isn't the best situation in the world because right now their policy is to try to leave them in one place for five years. The only thing is, if you have a minister that is appointed to a place. . . Well, the last one that we had wanted to be in a city church and he didn't get one. When one opened up they sent him there. I think, for the main part, that it's better if they stay at it longer. It's hard to even get to know the people or to get the cooperation

and the privilege to accomplish anything if you move every year or so.

B: Can you tell me about who originated the idea of the drive to get the Sunday School room built on?

F: No, I think, at that time, we had some young people that put a lot of effort into the Sunday School. We had some good Sunday School superintendents. They were young: Jim Kemp, Bob McMillion, Jim Pelton. They were all in a young adult group. They put a lot into it. They thought up different things and we had a large Sunday School class. There would be over 100 in Sunday School. Even after the church attendance started to dwindle, we pretty much followed along the same line as other churches. The Sunday School kind of kept up it's momentum for a long time. They don't now, it's down at a low level. I think it was because the young people were enthusiastic then, and the fact that they gathered the kids up and they took them on a trip to Washington. They did other things, but they did a lot of things like that. They sent balloons up in the air and they had a Sunday School picnic. They'd have a chicken barbeque outside. They put a lot of effort into the kids. I think that was the drive behind it, to get the Sunday School and the education. I can't really remember whether there were more than one or whether it was any one individual. I know that to start it, Gilbert Shilling started the fund of the building and they had a sale up at the townhall. People donated things to sell, they brought in harvesting. That was, I think, the start of the building fund. They went around and canvassed the whole town and a lot of people donated to it, the building fund. More church members were interested in the church. They like to have a church in the community whether they attend it all the time or not.

B: What do you see as the purpose of Sunday School?

F: I think it teaches a child the Bible; and also it enables them to see other children and associate with other children. I think the fellowship is good. I think that's what Sunday School does for them.

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B: What do you think some of the qualifications should be for a Sunday School teacher?

F: They should care about children. It would be nice if they were older. We have used younger kids and it probably does them a lot of good and they are adequate in some ways, but I think experience counts for a lot. It would be nice if every teacher had teacher's training. But you'll sometimes find that teachers are born and not trained.

B: What are some of the trends you see in our Sunday School now? How do you think our Sunday School is developing now?

F: I'm not sure that I've had my hand in it enough to know. I do know that we have a lot of youngsters out there on Sunday morning that aren't in Sunday School. They are there for us if we could think of some way to interest them.

B: Do you have any idea about how to do that?

F: No, not really. About the best way is to get the kids so enthusiastic that they'll go out and ask their neighbors to go with them. We haven't been too active in that counsel, just the ones that go to the meetings. Really the church hasn't done that much. I think that part of that is the fact of Sara working with the kids. Another think that I like to see is the two churches together. It saves her time and it's a good relationship for them.

B: Do you think there has always been a financial hardship within the church?

F: It seems like that's been the trend. The only time that I can remember when it didn't seem like money was tight was when Don Sulliman was here, and we had a lot of people coming to church. That may have just been that peak of church attendance that was all over. I don't recall there was as much worry about finances then as there has been since then. Now, just before that they had to go out and really beat the bushes in order to pay their minister's salary. So, the personality and the popularity of the minister determined it.

B: When you were in your early 20's do you remember the church being a lot stricter in regards to playing cards, smoking, and drinking?

F: Oh, very definitely. There wasn't much of anything you could do, outside of going to church, that was right.

B: Do you remember any particular instances?

F: I'm sure that it came up, and that things were just definitely wrong. It was movies and they weren't the kind of movies that they show nowadays. In comparison, they were Walt Disney movies. Dancing was taboo and not too long ago it was still taboo with a certain generation of our church. It was to the point where it had caused some trouble. Card playing and even roller skating were taboo. Like I say, there wasn't much of anything that we could do. We could have parties and candy pulls and bazaars and things like that. Most anything outside of the social life in the church was considered wrong. It's just hard to visualize. There has been a big change that way.

B: What was that special policy?

F: I guess the fact that if you wanted to see somebody or date somebody, they'd walk you home from church and that would be your date. That wasn't the only reason we went to church, but you desire to get out and have a social life. You couldn't have too much of that in school either. I don't think we had as many school functions then because we had the same members on the school board that we had in the church and they didn't allow us to dance in school either.

B: How did you meet your husband?

F: Well, I worked in Cleveland and I met him in a restaurant. I was the waitress and I kept his water glass filled to the rim.

B: So, what made him come out here?

F: Well, he went out there to work. It was during the war. He was an engineer and he went to work for General Motors. He came out here because of me.

B: Did he become active in the church right away?

F: I don't think we were all that active when we first came here. We had the kids when they were little and we weren't that active. At the start we weren't, but it wasn't long after that we were. I think when Reverend Sulliman was here we were more active because he was in

the same position that we were in. He was raising his family and had a lot of the same problems.

B: What was so special about him?

F: It was just that he was a dynamic little man that cared a lot. I don't know. . . It wasn't that he had any less problems or that he had a lot of education because he went in as a lay preacher and took study courses, but it was the fact that he cared about people as much as anything. He did a lot of his ministry in the hospitals and they didn't always have to come from the Methodist Church for him to visit them. It was his personality. His wife was very musical and she played the organ. Sometimes, someone else would play the organ and she would direct the choir. All the kids could sing, but now, Reverend Sulliman couldn't sing. Her sister would come to visit and they put a lot of themselves into a lot of the programs that the church had that way.

B: Do you remember the special quartet that used to be here in Dorset?

F: No, that would be before me. I remember when Otto Keep used to come down from Erie and go to church once in a while. He'd grown up in the church as a boy and he would always sing. Albert was a friend so he did a solo. I know that Benton was one of the trustees at one time. The Keeps were very active in the church, I'm sure, but I think it was that particular bunch of them. Now, Charlie Falkenburg may have been one of those. He sang tenor and later on he used to sing solos for the church.

B: What do you think of the music program of the church?

F: I like it, especially when they have the choir I enjoy it. Certainly Wolda is very proficient. I think, sometimes, she does so well that we don't even realize it. If we didn't have anybody there, we'd realize just what she does accomplish. I like it and I like to see them work the kids in as much as possible. Anytime that you're going to have anything that you have children in, you notice that, that brings the parents out.

B: Do you see this trend of less and less attendance at church?

F: I think we've been in that for several years now,

because it doesn't seem to make any difference the type of minister that we have, the type of sermon that we have. It just doesn't bring out the congregation here.

B: Do you think this is something unique here, or something worldwide?

F: I think it's more worldwide, in going to conference, if you'd look at the statistics. It follows through that it's just about everywhere.

B: Do you see any reason for this?

F: Yes, maybe, some of it transportation. A lot of people go camping on weekends. Now they may attend open air churches or something. I think that does a lot of it. Even kids that would normally be in Sunday School I think lots of times aren't there because they pick up and go.

B: Were there any reactions or opinions when we joined with the evangelical church?

F: I think, at that time, I had gone to conference and, of course, you go lots of the reaction there. I don't know if we had so much reaction as possibly the free methodists. I think they were actually a bit more fundamental than we were. Maybe they didn't feel we answered their needs much, which I'm not sure, but what I concur with them. I could see their feelings.

B: On the list of past ministers that I have, is there anything that you can remember about them?

F: The first one that I ever heard about was J.C. Mayhew and he also had, I don't know how many churches he had then, but I'm sure he was the minister up in South Denmark where my mother went. That was in 1914 to 1921. I've heard of Hulbert but I don't have much of a memory of him. Mayhew had the house built across from the telephone office and lived where Russell McConnell lives, after he retired. I think Albert and his father built that house.

B: Which one was that?

F: That was J.C. Mayhew where Russell McConnell lives across from the telephone office. I knew him after he retired. Hulbert is a familiar name, but I don't have any memories of him. Mr. Kelley, I do remember; Gladys

Keep was his daughter and also Frances Kelley, I think she's a kindergarten teacher or something. She was a little woman. I think she was a lovely kindergarten teacher. Mr. Guiler, I remember him. His wife had an aunt that was in a leprosy camp. She went there to work first and I think she contracted leprosy. I remember she used to get up and give a talk about that. Their youngsters were in school at the same time that we were. I remember Mr. Keane, he was a very stern Englishman. He was one of these, "This is my way and it had better be done my way." Reverend Nuzem was the one that, I think, sparked the brotherhood group. It was so active. I remember Miller, but not too much. Smith went out to Montana to be a missionary with the Indians. He used to bring us pictures and things later on. Fowler, I remember him, but not vividly. Stephens was the one that left.

B: Do you know why he left?

F: I'm not sure. It may have been healthwise or the health of his wife or something. I don't know just what it was. Sulliman, of course, I think he was probably one of the ones that was the closest to my memory and affection. Reverend Jones, then, was a good man, but following in the footsteps (of Sulliman), I don't think we ever really appreciated him. He had a wife that was a schoolteacher. We felt that she was a very good schoolteacher.

The McElroy's had three little girls that were just as pretty as pictures. Shelling is the one, I think, that really started the building fund and worked on that. The educational building was begun when Art Deutsch was here. I think he had the Bishop out, it seems like at that time.

B: Do you remember anything about the mortgage burning?

F: I'm sure we were there but I was thinking it was Arthur Deutsch. Reverend Edgar and Mrs. Edgar were both so good to Paul. Paul would go by in a carriage and yell, "Hi, preacher" at him. Reverend Won, I remember, and has just had a baby boy.

B: What was the reaction in Dorset about having a Korean minister?

F: I remember when we found out that Reverend Edgar was going to leave and the superintendent brought him in, I

was expecting almost anything because he really hadn't said that much about it. When Reverend Won came it was different. There was a reaction, but I think it was Jim Comp asking if he would plan to stay a while or if he wanted to move right away because that was the trouble that we were having. They were moving every year or so. Not only did you miss out on the preacher, but you always had those huge moving bills to pay. This church couldn't afford that and he said that he'd plan to stay if it wasn't to the detriment of the church if the people wanted him and it wouldn't hurt the church. He was a very intelligent man. He seemed to be able to sense situations and things. I don't think there was ever a big controversy at all. There may have been some people who stayed away because he was Korean, I don't know. I don't think the people that went to church ever felt that. You had to listen to him very carefully in order to stay with him because he does have a different accent. If you could stay right with his sermons, they were beautiful. That first one was almost like poetry. There was a lot of himself into it and he had a good relationship with the young people. He was very agile and it amazed me the things that he could do. He used to play soccer. He liked table tennis.

B: He also liked acrobatics. Do you think that this church is more centered on itself or on world and mission problems?

F: I think it's more centered on itself.

B: Do you think that's good?

F: Probably not, but I'm not sure it will change.

B: Next year is our 100th birthday. What are some of the problems that you see in our church as a whole that you would like to work towards rectifying?

F: I don't know, but I think probably financial problems because the budget goes up each year and sometimes I don't know where the money comes from. I'm surprised that they stayed solvent. Certainly, it would be nice if we had a larger congregation and if we came in contact with more people. Other than that, there may be problems there that I'm not aware of.

B: Do you remember Mrs. Moses and when she did those paintings for the church?

F: Yes, I remember her and her husband. Of course, you'll find that Lois Lina is a relative. I think she might have come from out of town, but Hugh Moses, was Al Moses' son. Ruby Van Winkle and Austia Van Winkle were his sisters. That's Lois's mother.

B: Why did Mrs. Moses paint the pictures for the church?

F: I think that she was interested in the church. I don't recall that they attended every Sunday, but I think it was something. . . In the first place, the "Together" magazine started. It was a Methodist Publication and they had some beautiful pictures of all the apostles and I think that was what inspired her to do those. Then, it seemed the logical place to put them was in the church.

B: Do you know how long it took her to do that?

F: No, I don't know. Lois would be able to say more about them.

B: Do you remember when the town used to have fall festivals or special things like that?

F: Yes.

B: Did the church play a part in those?

F: I don't think as such that it did. I think it was more just as a member of the community, but I don't recall that they did as a church. Now, they might have, but I don't recall.

B: Did you have any special sermon that stands out to you out of all the ministers that we've had?

F: Oh, there have been sermons that I'd sit there and cry over, sermons that Reverend Sulliman gave. The one that I especially remember, and perhaps because it's been more recent and my memory isn't all that it should be, is the one that Reverend Won gave about when he was a little boy and he and his brother were in Korea and they took his father prisoner over in Japan or someplace. They got away and just shifted for themselves and found food as they could. They finally located aunts and uncles, but it was just the thought of those two little boys out there all by themselves. You know how we look after our kids and they had no parents at all. When he told about that one Sunday, it just touched me so

deeply. That is one that stands out. I got a copy of that one. I know one Halloween somebody had stuffed a suit and put it in the road and it looked like a dead body. He said, that frightened him because he had seen so many dead bodies. But this one sermon, it was just pitiful to think of two little boys, that way.

B: Do you have a favorite hymn?

F: No, I don't think so. I like a lot of them.

B: How long have you been a lay reader of the church?

F: I'm not sure about that. It may have been about four or five years, but I'm not certain. I was a lay representative to conference a number of times but I don't remember how many years it was.

B: What are some of the duties that you see as a lay representative?

F: A number of them I don't fullfill. I think there are occasions when you have to help out if you have a visiting minister. In some instances I've tried to be over there if we did have another minister in order to introduce him at the door as people came in. Probably anything that would be helpful to the minister.

B: What are some of your memories about going to conference?

F: I can remember the first time I went. I was so enthused about it and I wrote down everything that happened. Reverend Sulliman told me to give a report and I had so much that I gave it and gave it until finally he had to go to church so he could preach. He left and left me talking. At that time, we shared. We took one from each church and then with the expense money that we got we divided into three. Then, I think the churches gave enough to make up so that you had your expense money. We had three representatives really, so they had somebody down there. I just lost track of the time. I never did quite like that after that. I know a lot of people just won't come to church because they think it's going to be a conference report and I think that may be why. Although in later years I got so that I could pare it down to about ten minutes.

B: Do you remember any of the issues that you worked on or discussed?

F: It seems like every year they had one that they were really flagging around. At one time it was the joining of the Negro churches and the others, that was about the first one that I remember. Then along came the one where the EUD and the Methodist churches were to join. The social issues, I never agreed with them on those. They were always much too liberal. I didn't think that they should get up and make those decisions for me, because I never agreed with them. Just like they said, one year they said everybody should go out and not buy any lettuce because of Chavez. Things they took that way, to me, it didn't seem that it was necessary for the church to partake in. To them it was social action, to me it was stepping over my right to make up my mind myself.

B: Were they enjoyable times when you attended these conferences?

F: They were enjoyable although it was a drag. You sit there and you sit there. It takes sheer strength to sit there all that time. I remember one time, Bob McMillion was with us and all of a sudden I heard a big snore and he had fallen to sleep. He wasn't the only one by any means. It does that to you, it makes you sleepy.

B: What are some of the ideas you might have about having the 100th birthday party here?

F: I don't have any real firm ideas about it. I think it would be nice to celebrate it and to have a special speaker, at least to refurbish the church as much as we can. At least bring it to everybody's attention that it is the 100th birthday.

B: What is your honest reaction to having a woman minister?

F: It doesn't bother me a bit. I think, maybe, because we knew Mrs. Edith Sulliman, and she preached, not here but. . . So, a woman minister wasn't all that strange to me, but I do think that there's a feeling among some of the ladies that they might miss out on something. For this reason, when you had a man minister you had two for one because the preacher's wife was always involved. Now, sometimes I think there's a demand for Sara to do things that the man minister wouldn't have to do, but it really wouldn't be expected of the minister. So, she almost has to be two for one. It's kind of up to the individual too, although you might get criticized for it, maybe, but I know Edith Sulliman said, "Well, I'm

not going to bake for the ladies aid and for the bake sales. I'll do the choir directing." She set priorities with her time. She had three churches where she had to divide herself. That was one of the things. That's the only thing I see as bad about a woman minister; you lack a minister's wife. As far as I'm concerned it has been fine.

B: Do you think it was a good experience having a woman minister and a Korean minister?

F: Korea will never seem so far away to me again. Anything that I read about Korea or anything else means a little more to me than before. I think it was a broadening experience for me in a very narrow world. Maybe, I didn't expect it to be as much as it really was. I think it was good.

B: Is there one word or a special characteristic that you would use to describe our church?

F: To me, the church is a second family. The people in it are people that you love and that you know you can count on. It means a lot to me.

B: What are some of the goals or new ideas that you think the church could use in the next 100 years?

F: I think it would be. . . If they had more contact with the community. If they could bring in more of the community or go out to more of it, and to influence more young people.

B: What do you see as the duties of the minister?

F: To preach the sermon, visit the sick, to care about people. I know that they have to do the organizing and that sort of thing as well, because they are accountable to those people that are over them. I think. . . And I like the ministry to the elderly too. I think that a good many that we've had have fulfilled themselves in that too.

B: How do you see our particular church's relation to you conference?

F: Adversaries. I think conference asks things of us that we don't really feel are completely justified. I think moneywise and in the red tape that goes along with it and the fact that they don't consider us for what we

are, a small church with limited finances and perhaps conferences built around a lot of the bigger churches and the functions that they have. Certainly, I don't think the conferences are rural minded at all. That may be just because my outlook is not that broad.

B: What do you think of the clothing center of our church?

F: Well, at first I thought it would just be sort of a nuisance, a mess, but if that much of it has moved, if there is beginning to be a demand for it, and certainly I approve of the fact that you conserve and you don't throw away things that can be useful to someone. I think the idea is good, but I still think that it gets a little messy sometimes. I guess on the whole, I'd say I'm for it. Now, see you've been over there working on it, but I haven't had the opportunity to do that because I just haven't had the time available, so I haven't been around it as much.

B: We got clothes from Ashtabula and people came over from Andover. It's becoming more widely known. We're using the money for missions and work projects.

F: So, although, from this church, and we aren't that missionary minded, it does give us a mission project.

B: Also, it is a mission right here, because we're helping people here in the area.

F: One thing that I think we need to do is to help those that are here. Sometimes if you look too far out into the field you miss what's right out there under your nose. It's too bad that we don't do more. Old people really are at a disadvantage out in a rural area. They may be a little safer, but they can't get the attention they could get if they lived in the city. It's harder for them to get transportation.

B: As a whole, how would you describe your experiences in this church?

F: I think that I am considered controversial. Possibly, if you wanted anything to take action, if I took a stand against it would be more apt to pass. I don't think I am as much now as I used to be.

B: Do you regret that or does it bother you?

F: It doesn't bother me, no.

B: Do you feel you stood up for what you thought was right?

F: I think so.

B: Do you have any ideas about how we can improve the relationship between the church and the community? You mentioned bringing in people, is there anything like our clothing center that you think we can do?

F: I think if we would look around to people that have a need, the older people, and this has to be sort of on a personal basis too. Now, I know the Corbetts have always done a lot for people who didn't have a way to go anyplace. We could consider people that are at a disadvantage and try to work out something that would be helpful. The clothing center is definitely a good project that way.

B: Do you mean taking them to the doctor and things?

F: Yes, I know the Corbetts did that with Mabel Hill when she lived up there by herself. There have probably, without a doubt, been others too. I know Althea Ferguson, when she was coming to our church regularly, very seldom would she come with an empty car. She would call somebody and bring somebody along with her. We could do more of that, I think.

B: Looking at our church, since you've known it, what do you see as a general development in its history?

F: I'm not sure whether the church has been that much different or not. I know the church, to me, means a great deal, but it's just a part of me that I'm not certain has changed all that much.

B: Do you think it's remained relatively stable?

F: Possibly.

B: Is there anything special that you'd like to add?

F: No. I think not; it has been interesting.

B: Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW