

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St. John's Episcopal Church

Personal Experience

O.H. 1353

ARDEN S. FARRAGHER

Interviewed

by

Jane R. Butterworth

on

November 7, 1990

ARDEN FARRAGHER

Arden Louise Smith was born in Youngstown, Ohio on June 20, 1929. Her parents were Ivan C. and Eleanor Hogle Smith, and she has two sisters and one brother. Arden has been a member of St. John's Episcopal Church all of her life and has wonderful recollections of her childhood and young adulthood as a member of the parish. As a young adult, she attended Ohio University for two years and then completed a degree in Occupational Therapy at the University of Wisconsin in 1952. She married William E. Farragher at St. John's on December 29, 1951, and they have raised five children. Two of their daughters, Kelly and Allison, live in New Hampshire with their children, and their son Mark lives in San Francisco. Kate Louise, the youngest daughter, is no longer living. The Farraghers' youngest child, Robert, is a foster son, and still lives in the Youngstown area.

In between busy maternal duties and church activities, she was employed at the Easter Seal Society from 1975 to 1983 and 1985 to 1988. From 1988 to the present, she has worked on the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation unit at Western Reserve Care System. She has been active in the community as well, as a member of the Junior League of Youngstown, "Leadership Youngstown" and the Ohio OT Association.

Aside from family, the luckiest recipient of her time and energy has been St. John's Episcopal Church. She has been a member of the Altar Guild, the Vestry, the Parish Life and Growth Commission, the New Member Committee, and one of the few women

ever to sit on the Finance Committee. One of the accomplishments for which she is most proud is the development of the Sunday Soup Kitchen which feeds many of Youngstown's poor and hungry every week. In addition, she was an initial member of the Stephen's Ministry, which is designed as a Lay Person support system for the congregation.

In the interview, she touches on many different subjects pertaining to St. John's. Although she was away from the area for a short while, her tie to the church has remained virtually unbroken. She speaks of her Sunday School and youth group memories and also her sojourn as a choir mother when her sons were in the boys choir. Her recollections of the clergy who have served St. John's are especially insightful.

One of the most interesting aspects of this interview is her observations about change in the life of St. John's. As the prayer book and hymnal changed, so did the services and congregational response. Arden has been in a particularly good position to observe the changing role of women within the church. In the last twenty years, women have moved into virtually all areas of church involvement. She has been in the forefront of many of these areas, and her example has led to more people becoming involved. Her latest endeavor is designed to mix new members with old in "Foyer Groups" which will hopefully strengthen the personal and social bonds within the parish.

Several years ago, she and her husband Bill jointly received the Vestry Silver Cross award acknowledging their lifetime contribution to St. John's. They have not only done a tremendous amount visibly, but also have contributed in countless quiet

ways. This is a valuable interview not only because she has spent her lifetime watching the growth and change of the church, but also because she has been especially committed to that growth and change in the life of St. John's.

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St. John's Episcopal Church

INTERVIEWEE: ARDEN S. FARRAGHER

INTERVIEWER: Jane R. Butterworth

SUBJECT: Involvement in various areas of St. John's,
reminiscence of past, childhood, changes in
the church, women, youth group

DATE: November 7, 1990

B: This is interview with Arden Farragher for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on St. John's Episcopal Church, by Jane R. Butterworth, at Mrs. Farragher's house, on November 7, 1990, at 7:30 p.m.

How long has your family been involved with St. John's; your parents?

F: Just about all of my life, which would be, I think I was probably eight or nine years old when I first started going there, so that would make it close to fifty years.

B: So, your parents didn't go. They moved here then, in other words?

F: I was born here. My parents lived here at the time, but my first recollection of the Episcopal Church was actually St. Andrew's, then on Oakhill Avenue. Then, when I was a young Sunday School child, we moved to St. John's, and I do remember a little bit about Sunday School at St. Andrew's. I don't remember anything about church services there.

B: What's your earliest memory of church at St. John's?

F: I remember Sunday School classes, both in the under-craft and in the parish house, before I have any clear memory of the actual big church. I remember Sunday School services in the chapel. At the time I was a Sunday School student, there were enough children that all of the classrooms down there were used on Sunday morning. We formed a little procession and marched into the chapel and sang hymns and had prayers in there. My earliest recollection of those Sunday School services is in a kind of Southern accent, because our Sunday School director was a Southern woman, Becky Butler. There were little crosses that Crucifers marched with, and I now realize that they were similar to the service in the big church, but the children weren't taken into the big church at that time for any reason that I could ever remember.

F: Yes.

B: That you remember?

F: Sunday School was actually between the services, and I was taken to Sunday School with my sisters. Probably not my brother, because he was enough younger that he probably stayed home. Then, my father took us and picked us back up. I don't think my parents attended services very frequently, because Sunday School didn't serve the baby-sitting purpose as nearly as I can remember.

B: That would be difficult.

F: Yes.

B: I can only imagine. Can you tell me a little bit about your childhood as you remember it, just looking back to get a basis for where you lived and where you went to school?

F: We lived on Canfield Road, which is West of the Lanterman's Falls Bridge, and I went to school at Cleveland School in Fosterville. Then, I went to Junior High at Princeton for a year or so. Then, we moved from that area. My father was in the army during the war, and we moved out of Ohio for the years of World War II. When we came back to Youngstown, then we lived on the North Side.

B: Were you old enough, or at the right age, to be involved in the Youth Group when you got back then?

F: Yes. When we came back to Youngstown, I was a junior in high school and I was involved in the Youth Group at St. John's.

- B: What kind of activities did you do?
- F: The Youth Group met on Sunday evenings, every Sunday as nearly as I can remember during the school year, and we usually had a service in the church. There was always the assistant Rector, or somebody, was always with us, and so was an adult leader. We had supper most Sunday evenings, which we cooked ourselves in the church kitchen, the same one that's there now. Our activities I think were mostly social. Many of them took place right there at the church, and some of the things I enjoyed the most were square dancing. We happen to have an adult leader who was a YMCA worker, and he was a good square dance caller. I enjoyed that. Every once in a while, we would have a serious subject, but I don't even remember that being particularly popular. I don't remember activities away from the church building. I don't think I even remember specifically anything else that we did. I don't remember being called on to help very much in the way that the young people are now, at serving meals and so forth.
- B: Did you do anything with fund raising with that group at that point?
- F: I think we might have paid a quarter apiece for supper, but I don't ever remember selling anything or doing a car wash. I think car washes were invented later.
- B: Do you remember about how many were in the Youth Group at that time?
- F: I would guess fifteen or twenty, and they were all St. John's kids. Some of the events, which I don't really remember, but if they were the square dances we might have invited another youth group from one of the churches down town. The kids in that youth group, I would say about two-thirds of them, came from the North side. And a third of them probably came from Boardman and the South side, and/or the West side. I never remember knowing the kids from the East side.
- B: That's not that far away.
- F: So, some of them were in our high school classes, and this was more of a high school group than it was any younger group, which is a little bit different than now. Junior high age kids are likely to be involved.
- B: Mostly girls, or an even mix?

F: No, I think it was evenly mixed. It was popular with girls and boys. There were fewer opportunities to go out in the community socially as unattached young people, especially girls, when I was growing up, than there are now. So this could have been the only social activity of a weekend. There was a little more interest on the part of the kids to attend. It was a supervised thing, but it wasn't a school thing and your parents weren't there. So, that made it attractive.

B: I wanted to know when you originally became involved with the choir?

F: Not until I was an adult. That was a men and boys choir when I was growing up.

B: That's what I wondered.

F: My brother was a chorister, but I was never even in the choir room until I was completely grown up, married, and the mother of children of my own. So, my choir experience at the church was fairly late in life compared to what kids can do now if they want to.

B: Were you a choir mother for a while?

F: Yes, I was a choir mother when Mark and Bob and some of those kids in that age group were singing in the choir, which at that time, was still a men's and boy's choir. So, this would have been when Mark was seven and eight, and into the ten year-old, eleven year-old age range. That would have been twenty years ago. There were, at that time, an occasional soprano soloist that was a woman, and the rest of the choir continued to be men. I can't tell you exactly. The boys gradually faded and obviously at that point they needed some women to sing the soprano parts. For a little while, there were some children in the choir, but the choir became much more adult oriented. You have to gear a program differently when your singers are going to be children. They read the music if you teach them to read the music, but you have to go slower teaching them the notes. At that point I think it stopped being a value to parents, and I think it had stopped being something that was popular with children a lot before that. The parents that continued to value that musical education kept their kids in the choir, but I think it was fading for the kids. I think it would be pretty hard to recruit boy sopranos at this point.

B: What did being a choir mother involve? I've read the term and heard it.

- F: You needed to be there on Sunday morning to help them find their things to put on. They all had assigned robes and cottas and black ties for every event except Christmas. They had red ties for Christmas Eve services and the Christmas morning services. You did a little general picking up and you did some mending of the robes. The buttons came off and you sewed those on. You tied all of those bows and gave them little pats and slicked their hair up if they would stand still for it.
- B: Sounds like an interesting group.
- F: It was a fun job. I had a good time doing that.
- B: Were you involved, I know the timing is wrong, but I haven't been able to find out how long the Kinder Club went on, the young married group. Were you at the right age?
- F: No I wasn't. My parents belonged to that group, and it was probably at it's height in the late 1940's and early to mid- 1950's. I was in school for part of that and then we didn't live in Youngstown for the first few years that we were married. By the time we came back to town, the group of people who were still involved in that club were not young people. So, that wouldn't have had a great appeal for us. I was never really a part of that group.
- B: It sounds like the sort of thing we could maybe use again.
- F: That's the kind of thing I think we're trying to develop. There have been some other things like that. There was something called the, SAC's wasn't it, Singles and Couples from St. John's, or something like that, and I'd say that was flourishing nine or ten years ago for three or four years and then that faded. That was more young people.
- B: Why do you think the Kinder Club started up?
- F: The Kinder Club was primarily a married group, and they did purely social things, but that was a married group. The SAC's attempted to address all young people, young adults, and we were a little bit out of that age bracket going the other direction by then, so we were never involved in that one either.
- B: This is a little tougher question but I am wondering, if possible, if you could you share any recollections of the various ministers that you've known at St. John's as you were growing up and then after you came back?

F: I have a vague recollection of Dr. Striker, and I don't know whether that's by reputation or whether I can actually recall him. My recollection is that he was a slight man, I think he was tall, but I was a child, so that could have been a child's perception. Those early clergy people were more remote than the clergy is today, and I don't think that's just because I was a child and they were grown-ups. I think that we saw them as fairly devout holy people, at least I did, and they were just kind of off by themselves almost. I do remember Dr. Kinder. It happens that he married my parents in Detroit, and then when he came here my mother was already acquainted with him. We were in high school with his two children. I was in between his older child, Peggy, and his younger child, Bill, so we knew the family that way. But, he too was kind of a remote holy figure as well as I was concerned.

John Burt I knew, but I didn't know particularly well, because he was in that span of years when I was off to college and then young, married and not in Youngstown, but he married Bill and me. He baptized Kelly, at least. I can't remember whether he baptized any of the rest of the children, or whether he'd already left by then to go out to California. There were some other ministers in that period, but those are the stand-outs.

Clarke Oler? I think is fondly remembered by anyone who knew him as a dynamic, glamorous kind of clergy person. He had a very attractive, vivacious wife, and three children who were kind of like you think clergy children are, a little bit out of hand, live wires. He was an assistant at St. John's. He was never the Rector, but he followed John Burt out to California. I think, John had by then been elected as Bishop of Ohio, and Clark was, I really don't know if he was the Rector or an associate out there at All Saints in, I think it's Pasadena. It's a great, big church.

Of course I remember John Wigle. He would have baptized a couple of the children, and married Kelly and Stan. He officiated at our daughter Kate's funeral, so I had a close association with him during that time.

Hunsdon Cary I remember. I remember him fine. I don't have any particular comment to attach to him. He was a good guy. He did a lot of things.

Then of course, we remember Henry Fukui as, I think, a very holy man, and a real activist. We were involved with him in the coffee house on the campus and we

really were sad about some of the things that had happened to him. He was a Japanese-American, as Beverly has probably told you.

B: She didn't mention him that much.

F: He had a PhD in chemistry and so he was obviously well educated and bright and his wife is a pianist. He ended up no longer in the clergy actively except he was always a supply person. In fact, I learned later that he visited my father the night he died in the hospital, and that's just like him. His wife was the one who told me that.

Jim Miner, another one I remember, I also regarded him highly for what seemed to me to be an extra measure of devotion. He seems like a very deeply religious person, one who believes. I didn't like to see him leave. Of course, Will Brewster, John Wigle, and there were some other assistants that I remember as well. Denny Serdal and Chuck Ransom, and, I can see a man but I can't think of his name, though. He left here to go to New Philadelphia. I don't think I am going to remember his name.

B: That's alright. I think the assistants are probably in official records somewhere, and we're looking for a feeling.

F: Sure, you could easily get the list of names.

B: I wondered if you were here, I'm thinking that you weren't now, for the making of the painting that hangs outside of the office, the great big one that was done before the changes in 1963?

B: I know what you mean and I certainly was in the church before those changes were made. I still think those pews were better looking than the ones we have now.

B: It looks so open when you look at the painting.

F: I think the painting exaggerates the spaciousness of the isle. I don't think that there is any significant difference in how the church looked. The pews were dark and they were high on the ends and there was a three-part design in the ends of the pews. They seemed comfortable enough to me as a younger person. I can't tell you whether they really would be comfortable now for sitting.

B: They had cushions?

F: Maybe they did, I don't remember. They may have.

B: I think Miss Lindsay said something about that.

F: I think we had kneeler cushions at the time. I don't think we had the attached kneelers, but I might not be right about that. I don't remember something a lot of people talked about when the rail between the choir and the nave was marble, rather than the wood that it is now. I don't really remember that.

B: Why do you think they would change that, marble would seem to be so permanent?

F: My suspicion is that it was rickety, but I'm not sure. They may have wanted the light wood to tie the choir stalls with the rest of the furniture that they now have, which I think is undistinguished looking compared to what we had before. I just don't think it. . . . It is comfortable and workmanlike and serves the purpose, but it doesn't look like the old stuff did.

B: What was the old floor like? Do you remember that?

F: No, I don't remember that. I guess it wasn't slate. It must have been wood, and I'm not sure. It's still wood under the pews, so I suppose that's what it was.

B: I understand the walls were really black.

F: They were pretty black. Youngstown was dirtier from more steel mills, and of course a lot of coal was burned before people got natural gas in their homes. So, that they heated homes with coal. So, there was a lot of black. It wasn't only the church that was black, your front porch was black. I think it probably was in common with a lot of cities. I'm sure that it was very sooty in the cities in those days.

B: Was it a struggle to get people to accept all this change in the church, all the remodeling?

F: The architecture? I think so, I think it probably was. You're right that during that I was away at college, or else I was away just having gotten married.

B: 1951?

F: Yes, that was it. My wedding was the last Sunday in December and there were two other weddings that day, and I think they were the last weddings before they started the remodeling, if I remember correctly.

B: That's interesting.

F: And we had the Christmas flowers, which were still on the altar.

- B: So the statues weren't there then either?
- F: No. The statues came during John Bert's time, but after the remodeling. They met some place else and the church wasn't used during the remodeling.
- B: That was my next question.
- F: Beverly probably knows where that was, but I don't. I don't remember, which makes me think I wasn't living here. I think that I can remember remarks like, "The soot was supposed to be there". They took the ivy off the outside of the building at the time. That wasn't popular, but as it was said then, and as I know now it's true, ivy is real hard on the mortar between the stones. You can imagine if it was ivy covered and then they took it off if that wasn't popular.
- B: I understand that the chapel was remodeled at that time as well?
- F: I don't remember whether that was the time. The chapel has been . . . I would have said that happened later and I would have said it was more redecorated than remodeled. The windows are relatively new, and I think the furniture is comparatively new in the chapel too, but I don't have a good recall for that. Essentially it was always laid out the way it is now, at least as well as I remember. The altar was where it is, and so forth.
- B: Was the undercraft really as foreboding and gloomy as I've heard?
- F: I suppose it probably was. It was darker, and the woodwork was dark in those days. I don't remember it as frightening to be down there. As a child I don't remember. I remember fairly vivid pictures of lining up to do that chapel part of it, and I don't remember that as dark or anything. Sunday School class is a little less vivid. I can remember going to confirmation classes somewhere up in the parish house with, I don't remember who the minister was. I don't remember a single person I was confirmed with, other than my one sister. We were together in the class.
- B: In the black book, the most recent of the written histories, there is mentioned a feast of lights, but they don't really describe what that was. Do you have any memory of something called that?
- F: I don't think so.

- B: It was right in with the Canterbury Choir, but those were two phrases that they used together.
- F: I was never in the Canterbury Choir, but I certainly remember that they had it. It was a woman's choir, and there was a time when there were three services. I think they sang at the middle service. I believe they wore blue robes, but the feast of lights, I don't think I can help you.
- B: It sounded intriguing. Do you recall how the idea for clerestory windows, the ones reflected with the steel industry, how did that all come about, and when?
- F: I know that John Burt was very instrumental in it and I would think it was probably his idea. That must have been happening a little after the remodeling. I think the windows were there, just as glass for light. It was decided, presumably if he thought of the idea, I imagine it was the vestry which tended to be a repeat of the same smaller group of people regularly. Some of the families represented at St. John's certainly were part of the steel establishment, and so it would be seen as a popular idea. There was more emphasis on labor and the value of the labor than probably they'd have put in, but they would probably have been willing to put up with that coming from John Burt. Isn't it funny how, all of a sudden those are historic in significance, but they're no longer timely. At the time they were put in, of course we were still very much producing steel in this area, and they were just kind of reflective of the economy and what we did in Youngstown. Now, all of a sudden, they're a pictorial history of what we once did, not what we currently are doing. I think of that every once in a while when I think about the subject of those windows.
- B: That's kind of ironic. Do you remember, I'm assuming that the stained-glass windows, the large ones, those have been put in one at a time? As memorials basically?
- F: I think pretty much. I think it's possible a couple went in together and there was a little bit of a fuss, they moved one. They wanted to put, in the North transept, they wanted to put a memorial window in for Pauline Jones. That was in the time of Hunsdon Cary, and there was quite a lot of, "Is this okay to do?" stuff, and they wanted to match a brighter colored one with another similar looking window. The memorial that was in that window was rather pale. I think they moved it over to the South transept, probably to the western side of it, I don't remember.
- B: Isn't it on the North?

F: The new one's on the North, oh, but you think maybe they moved it around the corner.

B: There are four windows in the transept, so only one of them is stained-glass.

F: Are we talking about the same places?

B: Maybe not. Transepts being the sides?

F: Yes, but I'm talking about the windows that would face north toward the parking lot.

B: Okay, I see what you're saying.

F: The windows that would face north toward the parking lot, and the windows that would face south, and there would be four in the west wall of the transept, and that's where I think maybe they moved one. That must be it then.

B: Because when I look down from the choir I see one. I was wondering if the others will be filled. It's probably outrageously expensive now to do that.

F: I suppose it is, and I never hear anybody talk about it.

B: They don't sit in the choir and look down?

F: Look at that plain window!

B: I wondered, Miss Lindsay didn't remember a whole lot about this, the banners, how they came into being, whose idea they were, and how that progressed? Were you involved in that?

F: Yes, I'm trying to think when the idea first came up. It seems as though, I know Bill was involved in getting them designed. There was some discussion of the possibility of interior changes, even including the possibility of a free-standing alter in the crossing where the transepts intersect with the main aisle. We visited a church in Cleveland, where that had been done, and I thought it was an interesting possibility, but it died just about as fast as it started. I think the thought of seriously contemplating doing that and trying to sell the idea just all of a sudden seemed like maybe it was better not to do it. Sometime a little after that, the banner idea began to develop, I can't remember if it was somebody from outside that suggested that some color would really benefit the interior appearance of the church or not. There was a

committee and I think maybe Nancy Morris might have been on the committee and Bill was involved in it. The one thing we thought needed to happen was that the designs ought to be a set. That we shouldn't turn this project loose to the ladies of the church. To each needlework up a banner the way they saw it. It ought to be if they were going to be quilted, they should all be quilted, or if they were going to be trimmed in lace, they all ought to be. They did get a designer, I think her name is Susan Russo, at the University to do the designs. I think you can still see the little framed designs, the small scale drawings of them. Then, the person who was the most involved in it, she helped make the paper patterns, so that they were enlarged versions of her original drawings. Out of some committee meeting evolved the idea of putting the church flag on the backs of all of them. Because they gradually began to realize that, in order to hang well, they needed more substance than just a single thickness of fabric. Karen Kelly was one of the most involved people when it came to actually organizing the sewing. This was at the time of the hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary, I think, the fund drive. They thought of the idea of having each banner be a memorial. That was a popular idea. Karen took a lot of trouble to involve family members in at least part of the stitching of the banners that related to their memorial if they wanted to do it. She was just very thoughtful about all of that. Then, there was a lot of, "How will we put the poles up?", and I think Paul Ricciuti might have been consulted about how to get those up and where to hang them. Then there was some concern about, "Was it going to deaden any of the sound?" and some things like that. So a lot of thought went into it and there was enough control so that it did end up looking like a series. You probably are familiar with the theme pretty much being the Creation story and moving forward to the Resurrection. I could hardly picture it when we were first talking about it, but I think they're a wonderful addition.

B: Never having seen it without, I can only imagine.

F: Is that right? They've been there that long already.

B: I've been here four years. I thought, from what Miss Lindsay said that they've been here a lot longer than that.

F: I don't think so. I think they must have just gotten up before you came.

B: Were they ever cleaned? I wondered about that.

F: It hasn't come up yet, but that's a good question. They will need to be cleaned. They'll get candle smoke and so forth and they'll start to hang, and sag with dirt. Certainly I think they could be dry-cleaned, and they probably could be washed. The fabric is just cotton, it is not extraordinary fabric. I wasn't hoping for fancier, rich fabrics. I was hoping for a slightly heavier quality I think.

B: It's hard to tell when they're hanging.

F: Maybe something like that shouldn't be too permanent. Maybe the time comes when you need a project of replacing banners, so if they're not worked and tapestry, the wall will. . . .

B: I think you'd have to wait long enough that the original memorials weren't so desirable anymore.

F: That might be true.

B: Unless the families wanted to keep them, but the idea was to have them hanging in the church.

F: They'll probably hang at least that long before anybody decides that they should be replaced.

B: I've seen a great change in church formality even as I have been growing up in the Episcopal church, and I wonder if you have any thoughts on seeing this progression at St. John's?

F: I think it's really important that it's become less formal. I think it's much more inclusive. I don't think you can stay real formal and welcome small children into the service, for instance. I think that's a tough issue for some people to deal with, but I think it's a very essential part of being open and inclusive. I've seen more informality in some churches I've visited than I see at St. John's. I think that's what all goes into it at St. John's tradition. The formality of the building, the nature of the people involved at the present time, I think, kind of doesn't inspire informality. I think if a Chuck Ransom were at St. John's today, he would be more informal from the Pulpit than perhaps Wil Brewster is able to be. I don't think you can do it if it's not your style, I think you can sort of warm up or branch out from your natural reticence, but I don't think you can change your whole approach to things and bring it off. So, we're about as informal as we're going to be.

I also think the music program doesn't lend itself to informality. Although I've certainly seen Ron expand and broaden out in, for instance, the use of some of

the spiritual tunes and some of those kinds of things. When he first came he was much more of an Anglican purist than he is now. I think he'd say that, too.

B: I'll have to ask him about that.

F: We don't have to restrict that. I think that Ron can live with that.

B: I'll give him a chance to respond in his interview. What do you recall about the change over to the new prayer book and the new hymnal?

F: I recall a lot more controversy about the prayer book than I do about the hymnal, and I don't think I can tell you anything too specific. I remember there was a lot of resistance, and of course there still is. There still are some people who would strongly prefer to go back to the 1929 prayer book. I really recall less concern about the hymnal at St. John's, than for instance, I've heard about the Methodist church and their new hymnal. On the other hand, when I've heard them talking about it and I think to myself, "I'm so glad that's behind us." So, I think there must have been more resistance than I am now remembering. I don't think my parents were alive when they did the prayer book. I might not be right about that.

B: Was that 1980 when that came out?

F: Well, then they definitely weren't alive. I'd have been more aware of objection if they had been alive than, certainly . . . I like a lot of the language in the new prayer book and I like the variety of the service. If I get to church a little bit early. I don't have too much trouble trying to figure out where we're going to be throughout the service. So, it doesn't bother me, myself. I'm kind of concerned that it bothers other people, because I think it's one thing that maybe drives people away, or makes them a little less willing to come regularly.

B: I wish I can remember where I was, but somewhere that I was during the changeover, they refused. They got them all and they put them away, and they just kept using the 1928's.

F: I also remember hearing about introductions. I think my brother's church might have done this. They made it a special day, and they came into the church and they began the service in the old prayer book, and somewhere early in the service, new prayer books were passed out and old ones were collected. Places were all marked where they were going to be in the prayer book that day, and that was it. They started using them. I kind

of like the idea of making the special occasion and really calling attention to this change has come, folks. We seem to just kind of phase into it. If I remember correctly, we kept some old books in the pews for a while, and I have been to churches since then where they use the old prayer book. I'm not sure how they're doing that. It's been ten years since I've used that prayer book. It was definitely after it was outdated, and I thought, what a drag. I went to an 8:00 service some place out of town and it just seemed so convoluted and long and turgid. I thought, give me back my new prayer book!

B: I think, even though the language is the old way, it's what's so special in some places. I just think something like Eucharistic . . . is so beautiful. We don't use it very often since. . . .

F: You liked it when you got to hear it.

B: You've been in an especially good position to watch the increasing participation of women in the parish of St. John's. If you could recall different areas, when were women first allowed to go beyond the responsibilities of the altar guild and choir mothers?

F: I'm guessing that when they integrated the choir, that was probably one of the first moves. I think the first vestry woman, if I'm not mistaken, it was Leora Asherst, who had served the vestry a number of years as the appointed clerk. She did the minutes and she went to every meeting. I believe she was either elected or appointed to an unexpired term. I don't remember which, and I might not even be right about her being the first one. I don't suppose that was any longer ago than somewhere between fifteen and twenty years. It wasn't so long ago. Of course, Cynthia Bronson was our first woman clergy person, I think, isn't that right?

B: That's a later question, I'll let you ponder it.

F: We had a director of religious education. We had some of them, one or two of them I remember: a German woman, and I remember one other one at some point. But, I think we've had women in charge of the Sunday School for a long time, going clear back to when I was a Sunday School kid. So, they were there from the beginning.

B: What about lay reading? Did that happen when women were included in the choir?

F: Certainly not before the choir. I'd say about the same time as the choir, or a little after that. Women began to. . . . That might have had something to do with the

new prayer book, too. When there began to be more lay participation, we didn't even have lay reader men forever. I mean, we had two clergy and one did part of it and the other one did the other part. It's really a relatively recent development that the men did anything but usher and sing, of course.

B: I know you've been, for example, on the finance committee. To have women on that must have been. . . .

F: I certainly continue to be the only woman there, except Julie, who is the church treasurer, and again, strictly speaking, not a committee member. That's pretty much of a men's club, but at the same time, I don't think very many women have taken the interest in it that they really ought to. I would certainly like to see more women involved in the finance committee, because I think there's a better chance that they'll pay more attention to mission, Sunday School, some of those nurturing kinds of things where the men are going to be more interested in the property and the bricks and mortar of the thing. I think that, to just be real general, women are likely to be interested in the program aspects of the budget and need to be paying attention to how these things are arranged. I also think that this is pretty much supply and demand kind of thing. Churches where there are fewer total people to call on, more women are more involved. I think that's partly a need, and I think that's partly what's going on with St. John's, too. If we had only an all male vestry, you'd pretty much see the same people doing it over and over again. There's a better chance of broadening it out to get some women, too.

B: Were you one of the first women? You were on the vestry for a while?

F: Yes, I was on the vestry for a while. I was among some of the first, but I don't think I was. . . . There were many others before me. That's sort of a regular thing now. I think Nancy Morris was the first woman warden, and I can't remember how many others there have been since then. Probably only one or two others. I'm not sure why that is. That's still pretty tradition bound, I think.

B: That seems fairly integrated now coming into this, but I've only been here a few years, but just reading back through the histories, women were almost nonexistent.

F: That's right. Now, there own organizations, I think, had a little more presence. They weren't always the Episcopal Church Women. There was this guild and that guild. They did social things together, and they did certain things for the church. I think they did things

like, they somehow acquired communion silver and things like that. They were influential within women's organizations in the church, rather than, as a part of a vestry.

B: I wanted to ask, too, about Cynthia being the first woman priest to serve at St. John's. Was this really difficult for some people to accept?

F: I'm sure it was. I've heard of certain men who only go up one side of the isle for the communion so they're not going to receive any part of it from a female if they have any choice. But, I also have heard that some of the strongest objections came from women, and particularly the older women. I think Cynthia, probably, largely overcame those objections, because she was particularly good with older people. I think that, certainly any woman that I've talked to, that she visited, speak very warmly about her and found that an entirely satisfactory arrangement. I have at least one sister that objects to that practice. So I know there's a lot of pretty irrational bias against it, but I don't know that it was any harder at St. John's than it was lots of places. Maybe it was easier at St. John's than we might have expected it to be.

B: I'm sure Mr. Brewster's acceptance of it made a big difference.

F: Right. The first time he was in a position to choose an assistant I think he was real mindful of whether that would be a good idea or not. But then by the time the position was open again, there were certainly some of us who were saying that it's time for a woman. The first time he didn't see that. We certainly all enjoyed Michael Dudley, so that was nice we got to have him. But then I think, by the second time, when he still had support for the idea, he also believed the time had come. Plus he had good women to look at the time. I would expect that now, that selection would be on the basis on the best qualified applicant. I also think that more qualified women are available than were then. He interviewed one young woman who couldn't seem to keep track of all the possessions. I can remember he had to mail her things after she left. I believe the Brewsters put her up at their house when she came for her interview. He isn't encountering that any more, he's encountering women that seem to know what they're about. So, I think whenever the time comes, the best qualified person will, it'll be easy whether it's a man or a woman, I hope.

B: We kind of already talked about this next question. I was going to say what other past programs can you think of which have been successful, like the Kinder Club,

like the SAC and that kind of thing? Can you think of anything else?

F: Some of those 1960's and early 1970's things were successful, were groups of people. The Coffee House was successful with a small number of people. This was an inter-church thing, and there were volunteers and it was in some dingy building over on the campus. I think I might be able to go to the approximate location, but I don't remember what building it is. It was just patterned after all the coffee houses with coffee and some cookies or muffins or whatever. During that period of activism there was a fair amount of support for it. There was also an organization for integration of races, and the acronym is ESCRU. I don't know if I'm going to be able to remember the words, but that's what it stood for. At that time, there were members from St. Andrew's, St. John's, St. Augustine's, and I don't remember about St. Rocco's or St. James', but they had monthly meetings and they were semi-social. They tended to be meals and get together. I think there might have been a small amount of fund raising. I think the main purpose of those meetings, the hope was, that somehow we would achieve greater blending of the races. What came out of it was a little more understanding of one another, rather than any real progress toward integration. I don't know why that died off.

There used to be the church women's groups used to be more successful than they are now. They had bazaars and they had, I don't know if you were here for the brass rubbings, I don't think that was women's groups. So whoever organized that, that was popular. I can remember bazaars as being a fun thing with lots of booths. The needlepoint project was real successful.

B: Tell me about that.

F: That was Eleanor Love's organization that did that, any woman that she could recruit and teach needlepoint. We raised money for the cushions by making little rectangular needle point panels with old English monograms on them. Then, [they] were applied to a wicker bag and the bag had a lining and it had draw strings. Those were sold. They raised money, and I was the old English letter expert. I would do the letters in these panels, which is the blinding job. You worked from a chart, and someone else did the filling. Then, we bought the kneelers for the altar, which were designed by Mazeltof in New York, which was sort of fun because it was New York. We did those various ways. Some of us did a whole piece. Then I can remember, besides doing a

whole piece, working of some of the center panels on a couple others. But, there were certain areas and whenever I'd go up to the altar there I know that I did the seeds in the pomegranate.

B: Did you do one of the long ones?

F: The ones around the altar, they're about two feet long by ten or twelve inches wide. We even did the gussets at that time, the part that goes from the top down to the bottom. The bottoms are something else, they're not needlepoint. But anymore, mostly you don't do gussets on needle point, you do tops and the upholsterer does the sides for you.

B: How many women?

F: I don't know how many, twenty, twenty-five. Sometimes people would start them and there was a lot of coming and going to distribute the yarn and the finishing was professionally done. We didn't do that. Then, I think, the first ones were the individual kneelers. I don't remember the long ones. I'll have to look the next time I'm there, whether we did them or not, but then some others were done later, and I wasn't involved in that. There was some seat cushions made for some of the chairs up there, and I wasn't involved in that.

B: Do you remember about when that was?

F: Yes, I can figure that out. My kids were little. We lived on Euclid. We moved here. It was in the 1960's, because when we moved here, in 1969 they were done. So that was when that was, from about 1963, 1968, or something like that. It took a long time.

The Boar's Head certainly has been a successful venture, and continues to be. That started out small and grew and grew. We made costumes for that, and some of them that started out, you know, you made them out of corduroy and some braid and some turbans and they got fancier and fancier. Those other ones phased out just like I'm saying the banners may do. Over time that's been, it started out pretty much of a St. John's thing, with a few soloists and it's become a little more inclusive in the community, which I think is nice.

The soup kitchen, I think is. . . . We have had some other mission efforts. We have had efforts for the neighborhood near the church before the University bought so much of it and it stopped being a place where people lived to any great extent. There were after school programs down there that some people attempted,

that met with mixed success. Never as successful as you hoped they'd be. Whether it was lack of knowing how to attract those children or whether it just couldn't be done. I don't know.

There have been scout troops at the church. I belonged to a girl scout troop down there. That was when you could safely get on the bus at Princeton Junior High School and take the bus downtown, and walk up the hill and go to girl scouts. Then, your dad would pick you up on the way home. We've had vacation bible schools and some of those things. Over the years, many programs have been successful.

B: Has the focus of adult education changed?

F: To the best of my knowledge, it was nonexistent until maybe ten or fifteen years ago. That's probably wrong, but that's certainly when my awareness of it seems to have begun. The Episcopal Church was never an adult Sunday School church in my memory. My father's family were Methodists, and I knew there was Sunday School for adults, but I knew that we didn't indulge in it in Youngstown. But, when I would go to church in Columbus with my aunts, my uncles would be there going to Sunday School, too, which I wasn't sure I understood, but it was before the late service. It hasn't always been, I don't think, anything that went on in any rate or degree there [St. John's].

B: Well, here's a selfish question from my point of view: What programs were available for your children in the church that aren't available anymore? For example, now that we have the early communion, and it's not combined with confirmation, as it was when I was growing up. Were there at one time classes for the young people to learn to take communion?

F: Not that I remember. There was just confirmation class. Certainly the choir opportunity was a significant experience for children, for the boys that could learn to sing. They did learn to sing, and they did learn to read music. Not so long ago, I heard someone say in Mary Lou Robinson's hearing that you can't teach children that young to read music. She said, as you can imagine, "Oh yes you can!", and of course, you can. But, we forget that you can do things like that. So, they did learn to sing.

I'm not so sure the scout troop at the church has any more to offer than the scout troop in the neighborhood, so that was an opportunity I had. I think the larger opportunity that made that possible was the more significant thing, and it's not church related. That was, the opportunity to move about the community as a child

in comparative safety. When I look back at that and I know how valuable that was, because we can't offer that to children these days, and that's very sad. Public transportation was very useful and children really were taken care of by all of the adults, rather than you didn't know what to expect. But I don't think particularly that the scout troop there was of any more significance than if it had been some place else. I don't know of too much else, because it was always the church that was remote from some of the people that went to it since it's in the center of town and we all lived out of the center of town.

B: That's true, I guess. It would be nice if they did some kind of program. Cynthia had a program for the children when she was still here.

F: Did she?

B: And, Eric participated in that, so it's kind of nice.

F: What was the focus on it?

B: Just basically communion, and she had a group. I guess it was Hal and Eric and I'm trying to think who else was that age. She had them come for two or three sessions, one with the video tape, actually it was a Catholic presentation, I think. But, it explained what communion meant. Then, she invited them all for a meal at the church that she had fixed, sandwiches and something else, and probably juice or something. They all shared this meal and so that they got the analogy, and that kind of thing. There was a lot of thought put into it. Selfishly I'd like to see something like that for Case, rather than just hold out his hand the way he does it.

F: I thought our youth group and the way that it was managed was an opportunity. The fact that we could cook our meals down there. There was a period when we had hired cooks and gradually people thought that only hired cooks knew how to work the equipment in the kitchen. Now, it's come back to where we all know we can turn the stoves on and cook meals there. I think that's a nice change that we've seen.

B: This is the last question. What do you feel are the special needs of St. John's, in order to thrive in the future both financially and spiritually?

F: I think we need to learn some ways to be evangelistic. I think we've made some efforts in making people feel welcome in our new member ministry, but I think we also need to develop in our ability to reach out into the community for members. I think we also need to keep

searching for ways to involve members that we have in programs and the work of the church. I think that it's too bad we can't get a gardening crew together, for instance, or a Spring clean-up crew. Somehow we don't seem to be able to get those things organized so that they're successful/fun. Activities that you would look forward to, and feel some sense of caretaking involved in them. I think we need to make sure that some of our community mission is hands on kinds of thing, like the soup kitchen. Every once in a while I begin to worry about too many of the soup kitchen sessions are being taken care of by other than St. John's members. I also value that for the community outreach aspect of it. I think it would be good if we made sure that we pulled in more St. John's members on a once-a-year basis, or a twice-a-year basis, and made sure everyone was participating in that program, other than just financially, which certainly we need that, too. I keep feeling a real need to have the church be fuller of people. Somehow I would like to be able to get more of the people that are members of St. John's to come to church. I think we need to do a more effective job developing the Stephen Ministries concept, so that some of our members are included that can't be there. I don't know if I can think of anything. I think financially, we're going to be alright. We maybe need to have more financial problems than we have.

B: It might draw people closer together.

F: If we needed to have bake sales and car washes, and so forth, to repair the furnace or we wouldn't be able to heat the building, we might be in better shape than if all we had to do is say, "Hey, we should pledge a little bit more, because of these needs." Certainly we're fortunate in those things, but at the same time, they might work against us. The fact that we have an endowment that really helps us with both program and building maintenance. That might not be in the best interest of the church in the long run.

B: I have one more question I just thought of. I don't know if you want to say, but I'm curious of all the things that you've done with and for St. John's. What's the most special to you?

F: Well, it's pretty hard to say. Most of what I've done there, I've enjoyed what I was doing and thought it was valuable. I think I'm pretty proud of having been involved in the very beginnings of the soup kitchen. We'd laugh when we'd think of how worried we were at first. When we first started the soup kitchen, we thought of our people doing the work and providing the food. We were looking for a site other than at the church to do it in, because we didn't think we could do

the crowd management that we'd need to do. We weren't sure how receptive most of the congregation would be to it. When you look back on something like that, you laugh at how timid you were and that was one of the times when we were, "Who's going to cook?" was one of the questions. We began to actually get in there and figure out solutions to things like that, and I'm pretty proud of that.

B: What about the Stephen Ministry?

F: I'm glad I've been involved in that. I can't say that I think that's a successful venture yet. I don't think that's really functioning the way it needs to function if it's going to really be effective. We made one effort last year to generate some interest in getting a second group of people trained. Some of the people who went through the training in the first place really didn't want to be involved in any kind of active ministry to other people. I think it suffered from Cynthia's departure. I think there was a better chance that we'd have gotten it to be more ongoing if that hadn't been the point at which she left. I think there's a lot of informal ministering to the older people going on, just on a one-on-one basis among many people who haven't had any training before. They just know enough to do it, but there are other needs that could be served if we could somehow get that moved forward a bit. I valued the experience of the training and so forth, but I'm frustrated by where it's at right now.

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

F: I can't think of anything Janie. I think you've thought of everything.

B: I really appreciate you talking to me.

F: I enjoyed it. I enjoyed it more than I thought I would.

END OF INTERVIEW