

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Universalist Church for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of this denomination includes those persons who have been confirmed or accepted by the local churches or parishes, the only general requirement for membership being assent to the general principles of faith and to the laws of the church.

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations).....	498	244	254	49.0	51.0
Members	54,957	41,475	13,482	75.5	24.5
Average per church.....	110	170	53		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	18,635	13,668	4,967	73.3	26.7
Female.....	31,745	23,822	7,923	75.0	25.0
Sex not reported.....	4,577	3,985	592	87.1	12.9
Males per 100 females.....	58.7	57.4	62.7		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	676	501	175	74.1	25.9
13 years and over.....	49,835	37,208	12,627	74.7	25.3
Age not reported.....	4,446	3,766	680	84.7	15.3
Per cent under 13 years ³	1.3	1.3	1.4		
Church edifices:					
Number.....	498	253	245	50.8	49.2
Value—Churches reporting.....	470	231	239	49.1	50.9
Amount reported.....	\$15,826,940	\$14,265,642	\$1,561,298	90.1	9.9
Average per church.....	\$33,674	\$61,756	\$6,533		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	68	57	11		
Amount reported.....	\$450,798	\$428,896	\$21,902	95.1	4.9
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	355	158	197	44.5	55.5
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting.....	164	99	65	60.4	39.6
Amount reported.....	\$1,082,777	\$843,977	\$238,800	77.9	22.1
Debt—Churches reporting.....	26	19	7		
Amount reported.....	\$71,640	\$61,740	\$9,900	86.2	13.8
Churches reporting "no debt" on parsonage.....	119	71	48	59.7	40.3
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	470	235	235	50.0	50.0
Amount reported.....	\$1,616,624	\$1,368,270	\$248,354	84.6	15.4
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$1,435,798	\$1,216,958	\$218,840	84.8	15.2
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$149,362	\$124,750	\$24,612	83.5	16.5
Not classified.....	\$31,464	\$26,562	\$4,902	84.4	15.6
Average expenditure per church.....	\$3,440	\$5,822	\$1,057		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	350	211	139	60.3	39.7
Officers and teachers.....	4,045	2,861	1,184	70.7	29.3
Scholars.....	24,738	18,188	6,550	73.5	26.5

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

³ Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 498 active Universalist churches, with 54,957 members. These figures are exclusive of 24 federated churches, each consisting of a Universalist unit combined more or less closely with a unit of some other denomination. These federated churches reported a total membership of 3,577, of whom 1,080, or about one-third, were Universalists.

The classification of membership by sex was reported by 463 churches and the classification by age was reported by 476 churches, including, however, only 65 which reported any members under 13 years of age.

Comparative data, 1890-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, 1906, and 1890.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1890 TO 1926: UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

ITEM	1926	1916	1906	1890
Churches (local organizations)	498	643	811	956
Increase ¹ over preceding census:				
Number.....	-145	-168	-145	-----
Per cent.....	-22.6	-20.7	-15.2	-----
Members	54,957	58,566	64,158	49,194
Increase ¹ over preceding census:				
Number.....	-3,609	-5,592	14,964	-----
Per cent.....	-6.2	-8.7	30.4	-----
Average membership per church.....	110	91	79	51
Church edifices:				
Number.....	498	620	776	832
Value—Churches reporting.....	470	609	776	-----
Amount reported.....	\$15,826,940	\$7,876,108	\$10,575,656	\$8,054,333
Average per church.....	\$33,674	\$12,933	\$13,628	-----
Debt—Churches reporting.....	68	110	132	-----
Amount reported.....	\$450,798	\$408,766	\$464,755	-----
Parsonages:				
Value—Churches reporting.....	164	147	136	-----
Amount reported.....	\$1,082,777	\$591,925	\$491,100	-----
Debt—Churches reporting.....	26	-----	-----	-----
Amount reported.....	\$71,640	-----	-----	-----
Expenditures during year:				
Churches reporting.....	470	578	-----	-----
Amount reported.....	\$1,616,624	\$1,069,075	-----	-----
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$1,435,798	\$926,948	-----	-----
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$149,362	\$110,204	-----	-----
Not classified.....	\$31,464	\$31,923	-----	-----
Average expenditure per church.....	\$3,440	\$1,866	-----	-----
Sunday schools:				
Churches reporting.....	350	467	596	-----
Officers and teachers.....	4,045	5,170	6,585	-----
Scholars.....	24,738	33,272	42,201	-----

¹ A minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

State tables.—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Universalist Church by States. Table 3 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 4 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches for the three censuses from 1906 to 1926, together with the membership for 1926 classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 5 shows the value of church property and the debt on such property for 1926 alone. Table 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX			
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Sex not reported	Males per 100 females ⁽¹⁾
United States.....	498	244	254	54,957	41,475	13,482	18,635	31,745	4,577	58.7
New England:										
Maine.....	56	17	39	5,646	3,318	2,328	1,996	3,518	132	56.7
New Hampshire.....	21	9	12	1,628	1,064	564	468	929	231	50.4
Vermont.....	31	6	25	1,999	838	1,161	675	1,121	203	60.2
Massachusetts.....	90	78	12	14,997	14,681	316	4,573	8,460	1,964	54.1
Rhode Island.....	8	8		1,381	1,381		450	931		48.3
Connecticut.....	8	7	1	1,781	1,607	174	543	770	468	70.5
Middle Atlantic:										
New York.....	68	29	39	8,099	6,337	1,762	2,819	4,727	553	59.6
New Jersey.....	1	1		350	350		150	200		75.0
Pennsylvania.....	17	8	9	1,591	1,152	439	627	930	34	67.4
East North Central:										
Ohio.....	41	11	30	3,467	1,503	1,964	1,091	1,921	455	56.8
Indiana.....	15	5	10	1,286	615	671	477	715	94	66.7
Illinois.....	28	17	11	3,957	3,305	652	1,352	2,280	325	59.3
Michigan.....	8	3	5	1,102	684	418	448	654		68.5
Wisconsin.....	8	5	3	1,047	836	211	419	628		66.7
West North Central:										
Minnesota.....	6	6		1,118	1,118		412	706		58.4
Iowa.....	6	5	1	548	423	125	177	371		47.7
Missouri.....	3		3	86		86	33	53		
Kansas.....	3	3		226	226		99	127		78.0
South Atlantic:										
Maryland.....	1	1		236	236		100	136		73.5
District of Columbia.....	1	1		169	169		49	120		40.8
Virginia.....	1	1		48	48		18	30		
West Virginia.....	2		2	84		84	20	64		
North Carolina.....	17	4	13	528	125	403	212	316		67.1
South Carolina.....	4	1	3	164	47	117	72	92		
Georgia.....	8	1	7	544	29	515	233	311		74.9
Florida.....	6	3	3	240	124	116	111	129		86.0
East South Central:										
Kentucky.....	7	1	6	455	64	391	187	268		69.8
Tennessee.....	2	2		110	110		40	70		
Alabama.....	11	3	8	577	103	474	228	231	118	98.7
Mississippi.....	3	1	2	239	55	184	100	139		71.9
West South Central:										
Arkansas.....	2		2	29		29	16	13		
Texas.....	9	1	8	316	18	298	145	171		84.8
Mountain:										
Colorado.....	1	1		89	89		30	59		
Pacific:										
California.....	5	5		820	820		265	555		47.7

¹ Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools. Separate presentation in Tables 5 and 6 is limited to those States in which three or more churches reported the principal items shown (values or expenditures), in order to avoid disclosing the financial statistics of any individual church. The States omitted from these tables can be determined by referring to the complete list which appears in Table 3.

TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, 1906 TO 1926, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926, BY STATES: UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches in either 1926, 1916, or 1906]

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926			
	1926	1916	1906	1926	1916	1906	Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not reported	Per cent under 13 ¹
United States.....	498	643	811	54,957	58,566	64,158	676	49,835	4,446	1.3
Maine.....	56	70	75	5,646	5,034	4,686	86	5,075	485	1.7
New Hampshire.....	21	27	26	1,628	1,611	1,993	-----	1,259	369	-----
Vermont.....	31	37	52	1,999	2,270	3,030	24	1,945	30	1.2
Massachusetts.....	90	99	106	14,997	13,203	12,983	255	13,831	911	1.8
Rhode Island.....	8	8	9	1,381	1,519	1,175	2	1,079	300	0.2
Connecticut.....	8	10	12	1,781	1,615	1,478	33	1,280	408	2.5
New York.....	68	104	127	8,099	9,175	10,761	61	7,075	963	0.9
New Jersey.....	1	3	4	350	566	910	-----	350	-----	-----
Pennsylvania.....	17	25	30	1,591	2,053	2,301	54	1,537	-----	3.4
Ohio.....	41	55	74	3,467	4,190	5,003	55	3,283	129	1.6
Indiana.....	15	24	44	1,286	1,656	2,506	15	1,271	-----	1.2
Illinois.....	28	39	54	3,957	5,244	5,165	24	3,608	325	0.7
Michigan.....	8	12	26	1,102	1,003	1,866	1	918	183	0.1
Wisconsin.....	8	9	14	1,047	843	1,342	16	1,031	-----	1.6
Minnesota.....	6	7	8	1,118	1,609	1,220	12	1,106	-----	1.1
Iowa.....	6	8	21	548	1,040	1,388	4	544	-----	0.7
Missouri.....	3	9	24	86	371	786	1	85	-----	-----
Kansas.....	3	4	12	226	322	937	-----	226	-----	-----
North Carolina.....	17	16	9	528	601	373	3	525	-----	0.6
South Carolina.....	4	4	4	164	146	121	1	163	-----	0.6
Georgia.....	8	12	20	544	591	656	7	537	-----	1.3
Florida.....	6	5	4	240	152	82	-----	240	-----	-----
Kentucky.....	7	7	9	455	392	520	8	447	-----	1.8
Alabama.....	11	9	11	577	609	533	4	290	283	1.4
Mississippi.....	3	4	5	239	254	285	-----	239	-----	-----
Arkansas.....	2	4	3	29	164	85	-----	29	-----	-----
Texas.....	9	15	8	316	492	270	4	312	-----	1.3
California.....	5	5	4	820	686	605	3	817	-----	0.4
Other States.....	8	12	16	736	1,155	1,098	3	733	-----	0.4

¹Based on membership with age classification reported; not shown where base is less than 100.

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

A distinction should be made between Universalism and the Universalist denomination.

Universalism has been defined as the doctrine or belief that it is the purpose of God through the grace revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ to save every member of the human race from sin. In a more general way, it has been described as the belief that what ought to be will be; that in a sane and beneficent universe the primacy belongs to Truth, Right, Love—the supreme powers; that the logic of this conception of the natural and moral order imperiously compels the conclusion that although all things are not yet under the sway of the Prince of Peace, the definite plan set forth in Him is evident, and the consummation which He embodies and predicts can not be doubted.

¹ This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Rev. Roger F. Etz, secretary, Universalist General Convention, and approved by him in its present form.

TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926:
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting value of edifices]

STATE	Total number churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		VALUE OF PARSONAGES		DEBT ON PARSONAGES	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount
United States.....	498	498	470	\$15,826,940	68	\$450,798	164	\$1,082,777	26	\$71,640
Maine.....	56	56	53	1,092,000	7	39,735	17	75,800	5	11,900
New Hampshire.....	21	22	21	332,000	4	12,700	8	39,500	8	3,000
Vermont.....	31	31	31	378,292	5	6,350	11	47,700	1	3,000
Massachusetts.....	90	97	90	4,711,000	26	212,223	33	272,950	11	33,100
Rhode Island.....	8	9	8	650,000	3	26,400	(1)			
Connecticut.....	8	8	8	529,250			6	92,000	1	5,000
New York.....	68	68	66	2,668,000	5	17,740	27	176,500	3	5,800
Pennsylvania.....	17	16	16	736,500	1	20,000	7	43,527	1	3,800
Ohio.....	41	41	39	654,550	7	48,900	11	43,200	1	200
Indiana.....	15	16	14	135,798	2	9,000	4	24,000	1	2,600
Illinois.....	28	29	26	1,283,800	3	25,500	11	67,700		
Michigan.....	8	10	8	653,500			(1)			
Wisconsin.....	8	8	8	302,000			5	40,500		
Minnesota.....	6	6	5	328,000	1	650	(1)			
Iowa.....	6	6	6	81,000	1	2,000	3	15,000	1	2,000
Missouri.....	3	3	3	6,500						
Kansas.....	3	4	3	50,500			(1)			
North Carolina.....	17	16	16	57,900			4	12,000		
South Carolina.....	4	4	4	5,600			(1)			
Georgia.....	8	8	8	9,050						
Florida.....	6	4	4	44,500			(1)			
Kentucky.....	7	7	6	13,300						
Alabama.....	11	9	9	116,200			3	11,500		
Mississippi.....	3	3	3	3,000						
California.....	5	5	4	330,000	2	25,200	3	26,500		
Other States ²	20	12	11	654,700	1	4,400	11	94,400	1	4,240

¹ Amount included in figures shown for "Other States," to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

² The figures for parsonages (value and debt) include data for 9 churches in Rhode Island, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, South Carolina, and Florida.

Universalism, it is claimed, is thus as old as Christianity; it was taught in the schools of the second and third centuries at Alexandria, Nisibis, Edessa, and Antioch; and it was accepted by many of the apostolic and church fathers, as Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Origen, and probably Chrysostom and Jerome.

Those members of the Christian family in whom this thought has become predominant and who hold to the idea that there is a divine order and that it contemplates the final triumph of good over evil in human society, as a whole, and in the history of each individual, are considered Universalists.

The Universalist denomination, however, is of modern origin, is confined mostly to the American Continent, and it embraces but a portion of those who hold the Universalist belief. It dates from the arrival of the Rev. John Murray, of London, in Good Luck, N. J., in September, 1770, although there were some preachers of the doctrine in the country before that time. Mr. Murray preached at various places in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, and societies sprang up in all these States as a result of his ministry. His first regular settlement was at Gloucester, Mass., where a church was built in 1780, but he afterwards removed to Boston.

TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting expenditures]

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR				SUNDAY SCHOOLS			
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Not classified	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	498	470	\$1,616,624	\$1,435,798	\$149,862	\$31,464	350	4,045	24,738
Maine.....	56	50	146,446	125,006	17,440	4,000	40	550	3,718
New Hampshire.....	21	21	45,194	39,066	2,159	3,969	16	140	808
Vermont.....	31	29	46,021	43,107	2,914	-----	17	148	920
Massachusetts.....	90	89	517,029	459,065	48,964	9,000	75	1,119	6,805
Rhode Island.....	8	8	51,967	42,683	3,505	5,779	8	112	622
Connecticut.....	8	8	66,754	59,454	4,300	3,000	8	102	614
New York.....	68	63	174,749	159,226	15,523	-----	46	495	2,818
Pennsylvania.....	17	17	58,829	51,924	6,905	-----	12	117	735
Ohio.....	41	40	72,067	64,489	7,478	100	36	374	1,840
Indiana.....	15	12	20,317	18,923	1,394	-----	8	92	611
Illinois.....	28	27	122,077	106,300	11,652	4,125	23	303	1,761
Michigan.....	8	7	35,862	31,099	4,763	-----	5	61	330
Wisconsin.....	8	8	23,559	21,527	2,032	-----	7	56	352
Minnesota.....	6	6	51,539	43,011	8,528	-----	4	54	287
Iowa.....	6	6	11,906	10,915	991	-----	5	40	169
Kansas.....	3	3	6,163	5,863	300	-----	2	15	100
North Carolina.....	17	17	22,727	21,390	898	439	7	37	324
South Carolina.....	4	3	315	-----	40	275	3	10	81
Georgia.....	8	8	1,462	1,215	235	12	2	12	105
Florida.....	6	6	13,665	12,320	830	515	4	16	106
Kentucky.....	7	7	1,668	1,495	173	-----	3	22	100
Alabama.....	11	10	50,550	49,305	1,245	-----	5	35	282
Mississippi.....	3	3	1,900	1,700	200	-----	1	6	30
Texas.....	9	6	1,339	919	170	250	-----	-----	-----
California.....	5	5	31,939	29,790	2,149	-----	5	54	497
Other States.....	14	11	40,580	36,006	4,574	-----	8	75	723

The earliest movement for denominational organization was made at Oxford, Mass., in 1785, but accomplished little more than to emphasize the need and value of fellowship, although it approved the name selected by the Universalists of Gloucester for their church, "The Independent Christian Society, commonly called 'Universalists,'" and approved also the Charter of Compact as the form of organization for all societies. The second convention, held at Philadelphia in 1790, drew up and published the first Universalist profession of faith, consisting of five articles, outlined a plan of church organization and declared itself to be in favor of the congregational form of polity. Another convention, at Oxford, in 1793, subsequently developed into the Convention of the New England States, then into the Convention of New England and New York, and finally into the present organization, the General Convention.

Among the younger men at the second Oxford convention was Hosea Ballou, who soon became the recognized leader of the movement, and for half a century was its most honored and influential exponent. During his ministry, extending from 1796 to 1852, the 20 or 30 churches increased to 500, distributed over New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, although the greater part were found in New England. It was, however, the era of the propagation of the doctrine and of the controversies to which that gave rise, and little attention was paid to organization.

The same antagonistic tendencies are noticeable, in the history of the Universalist churches, that appear in others holding to the congregational principle; on the one hand, an impulse toward liberty, opposition to ecclesiastical tyranny, jealousy of freedom, and suspicion of authority; on the other hand, appreciation of the value of centralized authority as against a crude, chaotic condition, and the realization that in order to efficiently carry out important ends in the denomination there must be some definite church organization with powers that are restricted, indeed, but still real.

About 1860 agitation began for a more coherent organization and a polity better correlated than the spontaneous congregationalism which had developed during the earlier period, and the result was that at the centennial convention of 1870 a plan of organization and a manual of administration were adopted under which the denomination has since been conducted.

DOCTRINE

The historic doctrinal symbol of the Universalist denomination is the Winchester Profession, adopted at the annual meeting of the General Convention held in Winchester, N. H., in September, 1803, and is essentially the same as the first profession of faith in the five articles formulated and published by the Philadelphia Convention in 1790. The convention adopting it was simply a yearly gathering of Universalists without ecclesiastical authority, and the articles were merely set forth as expressing the general belief of the churches. They have ever since been acknowledged by the denomination at large, however, as expressing its faith. They are as follows:

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest, and final destination of mankind.

We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

At the session of the General Convention in Boston, October, 1899, a still briefer Statement of Essential Principles was adopted and made the condition of fellowship, in the following terms: "The Universal Fatherhood of God; the spiritual authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ; the trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God; the certainty of just retribution for sin; the final harmony of all souls with God." However, to this statement of principles was added the so-called "Liberty Clause," as follows: "The Winchester Profession is commended as containing these principles, but neither this, nor any other precise form of words, is required as a condition of fellowship provided always that the principles above stated be expressed."

The theology of Universalism, while setting forth the predicates of its conclusion, that all souls are included in the gracious purpose of God to make at last a complete moral harmony, discriminates between belief in a result and faith in the forces by which the result is to be achieved. It points out and emphasizes the fact that effective faith in final universal salvation must rest on implicit belief in the value and potency of truth, righteousness, and love, witnessed by the free and steadfast use of these great and only means to the desired end. The teaching of Jesus, with which His life and works accord, is interpreted as a distinct revelation of these facts and principles, to wit, that God is the Father of all men; that all men are brethren; that life at the root is spiritual and therefore eternal; that the law of life is righteousness and its motive force is love; that human society, properly conceived, is a natural social and moral unity, or king-

dom of heaven; that this life is "the suburb of the life elysian"; and that physical death is the necessary prelude to immortal life. Universalism avers that the sinner—"and no man liveth that sinneth not"—can not escape punishment; but this is remedial and is meant both to vindicate the inflexible righteousness of God and to induce repentance and reformation in His wayward children. Throughout the history of the Universalist Church there has been a growing emphasis upon the responsibility of men as free moral agents to cooperate with God in the creation of His world. A favorite Universalist statement of to-day is "If all men are to be saved, then we are to save them."

The Universalist position as to the nature and place of the Christ has been stated as follows:

It is necessary to say, in view of opinions long and generally held among Christians, that Universalists are not Trinitarians. The position taken by the Unitarians of Channing's day, and held for a generation or more subsequently, would fairly represent the view that has been consistently set forth in Universalist literature and teaching. That view is that Jesus (the Christ) had the same essential spiritual and human nature as other men; but that he was chosen of God to sustain a certain unique relation, on the one hand toward God and on the other toward men, by virtue of which he was a revelation of the divine will and character and a sample of the perfected or "full-grown" man. There is, therefore, propriety and accuracy in describing this unique man as a God-man, a divine Son of God, the mediator, or way, between God and men.

Universalists, as a body, are now practically Unitarians, so far as the person, nature, and work of Christ are concerned.

As to the mode of baptism, both immersion and sprinkling are practiced, but usually in Universalist churches the candidate, whether adult or infant, is baptized by the minister placing his hand, which has been previously dipped in the font, on the head of the candidate, and repeating the baptismal formula. In Universalist parishes where a church has been organized the Lord's Supper is regularly observed, usually four times a year, and all members are expected to participate; but all others who would like thus to show their loyalty to their Master and cultivate Christian graces are cordially invited to join in the memorial.

ORGANIZATION

According to the laws of organization for the Universalist Church there is the General Convention having jurisdiction over all Universalist clergymen and denominational organizations, State conventions, exercising within State or provincial limits a similar jurisdiction subject to the General Convention, and parishes composed of persons organized for religious improvement and the support of public worship. In practice the local parish or society is independent in the management of its affairs, in the choice of officers or of ministers, and in the details of its administration. The State conventions consist of the clergymen in fellowship with such conventions and of lay delegates chosen by the parishes in its fellowship. The General Convention consists of its officers, present officers of each State convention, all ordained ministers actively engaged in the work of the ministry, and two delegates from each local parish, one of whom must be a man and one a woman. The State conventions meet annually, the General Convention biennially.

In order to remain in the fellowship of its own State convention and of the General Convention, the local church must be organized on the common profession of faith, employ a minister in the fellowship of the convention, and promise obedience to the laws of the convention. The State conventions have complete control of matters of common interest to the local societies in their territory, but they must administer these affairs according to the laws made by the General Convention, which is the supreme legislative body of the denomination.

In the interval between sessions of the General Convention a board of trustees, consisting of 11 members, and including the president of the convention, administers the affairs of the denomination, except those which are reserved to the State conventions and the general membership.

In 1898 a system of supervision was adopted which includes a general superintendent and local superintendents in many of the States, as well as regional superintendents in some sections where churches are comparatively few. Such superintendents act as advisory officers to local churches in securing ministers, solving problems, and as supervisors of new missionary work.

The General Convention, while it has general supervision over all auxiliary organizations, helps to support the work of such organizations as the Women's National Missionary Association, the General Sunday School Association, and the Young People's Christian Union, each one of these functioning in its particular field for the advancement of the general welfare of the church. All of them have their headquarters, together with the Universalist Publishing House, in Boston.

State conventions have committees of fellowship, which grant letters of license; examine candidates for ordination; authorize their ordination or refuse it, as the case may be; give full fellowship; transfer fellowship from one State to another; receive clergymen who are transferred from another State; and under the laws of the General Convention have full supervision of questions of fellowship and of discipline of ministers within their territory. Only ordained ministers are permitted to baptize or administer the Lord's Supper in the churches, and there are laws and standards of conduct which ministers must observe in order to maintain themselves in the fellowship of the State and General Conventions.

Owing to the peculiar early organization of Universalists into societies, rather than churches, the term "communicant" or "church member" does not accurately apply in this body. In a considerable number of societies there are as yet no church organizations, and consequently no "communicants," and in any society or parish the number of registered church members falls far short of the whole number of Universalists. Where there is church membership, the method of admission is not the same in all churches. There is, however, a uniform custom of requiring subscription to the Winchester Profession or the later Statement of Essential Principles. Most churches have a form of covenant also, in which the members join, but a large freedom of personal preference as to form of profession and covenant is favored.

WORK

The home missionary work of the denomination devolves, in the first instance, on the several State conventions, each of which has a board of trustees, and many of which have State superintendents charged with this particular branch of work within its territory. The home missionary work in new fields, and where the organization is weak, is in charge of the board of trustees of the General Convention or of the Women's National Missionary Association, and under the general supervision of the General Superintendent. The Women's National Missionary Association has confined its efforts in home work largely to North Carolina and Tennessee, the Young People's Christian Union has been supporting missionaries in Texas for some years, the contributions of the General Sunday School Association are used for the support of a school for colored children in Suffolk, Va., and for general work under the General Convention. The home missionary work of the General Convention has been carried on largely in the South and Middle West.

The report for the period October 1, 1925, to October 1, 1926, showed 20 agents employed, 14 churches aided, and \$48,432 expended. During the same

year the aggregate expenses for home missions by the different State conventions and their auxiliary societies, so far as reported, was \$71,983. For practically the same objects the National Young People's Christian Union expended \$1,552 and the Women's National Missionary Association, \$13,625. Thus the total amount expended for home missions in 1926 was \$87,160.

The Universalist denomination has, since 1890, maintained a mission in Japan. At the present time there are 8 centers of work, where 7 American and 5 native missionaries are regularly employed, with teachers and helpers of varying numbers. The report for 1926 showed 6 churches, besides a number of other preaching places, 348 church members, the Blackmer Home and a social service center in Tokyo, teaching and training conducted under the auspices of the mission in general universities and schools, property valued at \$96,000, and an endowment of \$71,422, with expenses for the last year of \$23,034.

The educational activities of the denomination in the United States include 3 colleges, among them Tufts College in Massachusetts, 3 academies, 3 theological schools, with a total of 6,166 students, and property valued at \$12,892,008. During the year October 1, 1925, to October 1, 1926, scholarships amounting to \$3,775 were distributed to students in the theological schools.

There are 4 homes in different cities, having a total of 166 inmates. The amount contributed toward the support of these homes from outside sources was \$64,399 and the value of the property used for this work was estimated at \$572,000.

There is a publishing house in Boston, with a branch in Chicago.

The auxiliary societies of the denomination report as follows: General Sunday School Association, 421 societies with 25,119 members; Women's National Missionary Association, 225 societies, with 6,799 members; Young People's Christian Union, 160 societies, with 3,500 members.