

THE UNITARIAN CHURCH

The Second Congregational Society (Unitarian) was formed in 1827 by a group who broke away from the First Congregational or North Church under the leadership of Moses Eastman, Col. William A. Kent, Lewis Downing and others. They met in the court room of the city hall at first and services were conducted by ministers from Boston and environs. Ralph Waldo Emerson was one of these and he married the daughter of Col. Kent.

The group grew to about 170 members and in 1829 built an imposing church on the corner of Green and Capitol Streets on land given by Col. Kent. The rest of the land on that block Col. Kent gave to the city for a high school building. This church was destroyed by fire in 1854 and was rebuilt.

In 1888 fire again destroyed the church as well as the high school building. The friendliness of the other churches was shown by the offers of the use of their buildings after each fire.

Again the church was rebuilt and stood until 1957 when the congregation had an opportunity to sell the land, with the permission of the court. They moved to 274 Pleasant Street where plenty of parking space was available. A modern building with a beautiful sanctuary and plenty of rooms for religious education was erected.

The church has always had members active in community affairs and many have served their state and country in important positions.

Many of the ministers of this church have gone on to positions of note in the Denomination. For instance, Sidney B. Snow went to Kings Chapel in Boston and later served as President of Meadville, the Theological part of Chicago University. Dana McLean Greeley went to the Arlington Street church in Boston and is at present President of the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

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