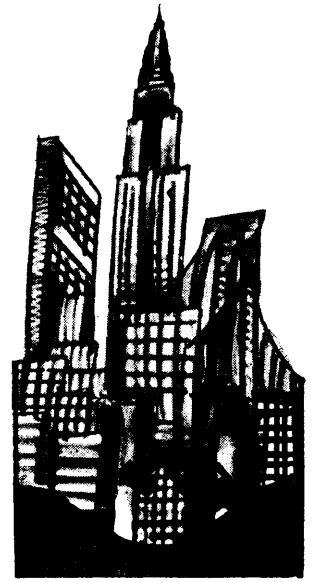


THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION

Have you ever watched giant cranes and bulldozers remove dirt from a deep excavation – so that a foundation strong enough to support a skyscraper or high rise apartment or a church building may be built upwards upon it?

The foundation referred to in Ephesians 2:19-20 and reflected in the hymn, “The Church’s One Foundation,” is a different kind. Rather than a pier and beam foundation to support a specific building, the “church’s foundation” is interpreted as being spiritual and built from heaven, downward to man.

Notice that the “He’s” in the text all refer to _____ and that the “She’s” refer to the _____. The text utilizes the biblical imagery of Jesus as the Bridegroom, the Church as Bride, and you and I – as individual members of the corporate church – the offsprings of such a marriage. Through our actions and the acts of members of the church throughout the world, God constantly initiates moments of new creation, changing and moving toward his ultimate purpose for our universe.



Traditional foundations use boards and nails and concrete and steel in their construction. Discuss how your own church interprets these parts of the spiritual foundation, named in the hymn:

“water” – _____
“the word” – _____
“his blood” – _____
“one faith” – _____
“one Lord” – _____

“one birth” – _____
“one holy name” – _____
“one holy food” – _____
“one hope” – _____

Though the text and tune were not written to be used together, each represents the work of a person skilled in his field.

Samuel J. Stone was an Englishman, an athlete, and eventually a minister to the poor in London. His hymns were written to help his people better understand the Creed of the church, using actual words and phrases of the scriptures upon which the doctrines are based.

Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the composer of the tune, “Aurelia,” was the grandson of Charles Wesley and named after his father and Johann Sebastian Bach. Wesley was a choir boy from the ages of nine to seventeen; and by the time he graduated from Oxford, he was considered the finest organist in England. If you have learned to analyze chords with Roman numerals, mark the chords of “Aurelia” and study the smooth progressions Wesley makes in both the melodic line and its underlying harmonic structure.

While each of us tends to think first of our identity in our own church by its name, its architectural appearance, and our activities there – how very exciting it is to know we are also a part of the moving, energizing force of spiritual Church without walls or traditional foundations and led by a vision of peace forevermore.

“Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
Shall be the Church at rest.”