1958

- MCC opposes "the use of public funds to support any sectarian school of whatever faith." (The issue, it seems, was bussing children to parochial schools in Augusta.)

- Rural Church Day theme: "The Rural Farmer and His Government."

- United Baptist Convention and the Episcopal Diocese of Maine decline the invitation to become members of the Maine Council of Churches.

1960

- The first awards are given in the Council's Achievement Program for Town and County Churches.

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WE HOPE YOU'LL BE WATCHING
your TV set (or visit a friend, if you haven't one). It will be called, we think, "THE DOOR IS OPEN," and will be presented over WCHS-TV, from 2 to 2:30 every other Sunday, beginning October 9. We hope you'll put announcement of this in your church bulletin.

And this year we have the honor to be a co-sponsor for "WINDOW ON STATE STREET," conducted by Dr. James W. Lenhart. This program is also on WCWSH-TV and will be presented September 18, 25 and October 2 at 5 PM. 1955 MCC Promo

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In A Continuing Effort
to create alert interest in government and help Maine people keep in close touch with their State Legislature, the Maine Council of Churches, through its Committee on Social Education and Action, is again maintaining at Augusta a Legislative Agent. The Reverend Harvey F. Ammerman, minister of the South Parish Congregational Church of that city, will serve in this capacity during the 1955 Legislative session.

Through "The Augusta Newsletter"
Mr. Ammerman will keep church people informed about developments of interest to them. Mr. Ammerman, in the Newsletter and in personal and public contacts, will not speak for the Maine Council of Churches or represent it in any official sense. He will work with the good citizens of the state, to bring them into closer relationship with the functioning of their state government, that they themselves may make their own voices heard on matters of importance to them and to the state.

The Biennial Legislative Seminar
of the Maine Council of Churches will be held under the supervision of Mr. Ammerman. This Seminar, held first in 1947 and continued successfully each Legislative year since, brings Protestants of many denominations together at Augusta to study the work of the Legislature and their responsibilities as Christian citizens.

A Man Of Experience And Insight
Mr. Ammerman brings to his task a fine background. Born in Minnesota, educated at Central College, Pulaski, Iowa, and New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, he served churches in New York and New Jersey before coming to Maine in 1923.

If You Wish To Receive 
"THE AUGUSTA NEWSLETTER" during the 1955 Legislative session, please contact Mr. Ammerman, 61 State Street, Augusta, or the Portland office of the Maine Council of Churches, 97A Exchange Street. It is issued without charge.

If You Wish To Attend 
The Legislative Seminar 
or to secure other information about the activities of the Legislative Agent or the Council's Committee on Social Education and Action, please contact either address above. The 5th Biennial Legislative Seminar will be held during February at the Green Street Methodist Church, Augusta. All may attend; there is no registration fee.

This Program Is YOUR Program
Cooperating with Mr. Ammerman and members of our Committee on Social Education and Action are able men and women in the Capitol area. This work is carried on with no compensation for him or for them, and is a service of inestimable value to our state. Your interest and your cooperation are earnestly desired.

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REV. GLADYS DOUGHTY YORK
1956

A founder of the Maine Council of Churches, Rev. York was the only woman in her graduating class at Andover Newton Theological School in 1935. She was minister of the North Yarmouth Congregational Church for 35 years. In 2000 she was honored by the Maine Council of Churches as one of Maine’s Pioneering Women in Ministry.

Maine Citizens Alert

Augusta Newsletter

Informing congregations about legislative happenings throughout the Session.
NEW OCCASIONS TEACH NEW DUTIES

1961-1967

1962

- MCC begins conversations with denominations not then members of the Council, especially the Episcopal Diocese and the American Baptists.

1963

- The Council co-sponsors a race relations seminar on the centenary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

- Mr. Luther L. Allen of Garden City, NY, a layman and graduate of Union Theological Seminary and on staff of the National Council of Churches, is appointed MCC executive secretary.

1965

- MCC executive secretary Luther L. Allen joins Roger B. May, vice president of the Portland Branch NAACP in a crowded hearing room in the basement of the Maine Statehouse to support the Anti-Discrimination Rental Housing Bill. A similar proposal was defeated by the 101st Legislature.

In prepared remarks, Luther Allen addresses the Legislature: “We call upon our legislators and the citizens of Maine to enact legislation which will assure equal access for all people to all employment, housing, education, and recreation.”

1966

- A new Constitution and By-Laws is proposed that would include a Preamble with specific Christological language. By a vote of 24-4 the new Constitution is adopted. However, the Preamble is rejected by the membership, declaring that the Council will find its unity in its common humanity rather than its common theology.

1967

- Rev. Philip G. Palmer, a United Methodist, is hired as Executive Secretary, to begin in 1968.

- MCC's Ecumenical Commission votes to join with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland and the Episcopal Diocese of Maine to create a joint Ecumenical Commission.

SEEKING COMMON GROUND. WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD.
1968

- MCC offices move to Maine Hall on the campus of Bangor Theological Seminary.

- The Ecumenical Commission of the State of Maine is organized at St. Paul's Center, Augusta.

1969

- Lenten series, "Relevance of Religion," co-sponsored with the Episcopal Diocese of Maine and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, airs on E-TV.

- The Council's Department of Social Concerns sponsors a "Symposium on Prisoner Rehabilitation" at the Maine State Prison in Thomaston.

- April 1, 1969: Finance Committee recommends that MCC give its support to the Joint Ecumenical Commission of Maine, and sets a firm date for the termination of the Council's existence.

1970

- February 18, 1970. MCC president Chester A. Baker to the Council delegates: "This is an historic occasion, for today your Executive Committee will present a plan for the orderly termination of the Maine Council of Churches."

- Delegates vote to close as of March 31, 1970, and adopt an expense budget adequate to meet all bills past and current, and honoring the Biblical injunction to - "Be in debt to no one...." (Romans 13:8 TEV).

- In an effort to maintain ecumenical contacts, the state's judiciary leaders create an Office of Religious Cooperation and agree to meet together periodically.

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**October 31, 1969: Executive Secretary Phil Palmer noted the 31st anniversary of the Maine Council of Churches.**

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**THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH IN SOCIETY**

When the bill to create a Human Rights Commission in our State was defeated on the final day of the 104th Maine State Legislature, one of the men who voted to scuttle the commission was quoted by the Associated Press as saying, "the problem in Maine is (not) nearly as serious as the do-gooders have us think." Another of the legislators thought that many people who argue for this kind of legislation are "driven by a guilt complex."

But the facts are clear to anyone who cares to examine them: minority groups in Maine are subject to a great spectrum of prejudices, from subtle difficulties in obtaining housing to overt discriminatory practices in employment and housing. This is just plain wrong, and to dismiss those who would correct this wrong as "guilt-ridden do-gooders" is a blasphemy against the basic principles of Justice and Truth and Love.

Governor Kenneth M. Curtis proclaimed May 24th, 1969, as Human Rights Day in Maine, in part because, as stated in the Proclamation, "The Social Action Committees of each of the major religious faiths represented in the State, and numerous of their leaders, have requested that a particular day be set aside for a rededication of the State to the cause of human rights."

The leaders of the Christian Churches in Maine, including Bishop Wolf (Rockport), Bishop Dickey (Bethlehem), Bishop Mathews (United Methodists), Rev. Thompson (United Church of Christ) and Rev. Palmer (Maine Council of Churches), and the Social Action Committees of the churches in the State, have demonstrated by word and deed that we can and we must go further to protect all of our citizens and their rights.

While the idea of a Human Rights Commission was dealt a serious wound on July 2, 1969, it is not yet dead, and we can expect that during the special legislative session in 1970 a major effort will be made to heal the wound and make the idea live.

Maine needs a Human Rights Commission: not because the alleged minorities threaten peace in the streets of Portland and Lewiston and Bangor. No, this is not the case at all. But Maine needs a Human Rights Commission because the basic human rights of all citizens to a chance to live and work and to be free from degrading prejudices of all kinds is not yet a reality.

The Maine Council of Churches will continue to keep you informed on the progress of Human Rights Legislation, and will invite you later to encourage our State Senators and Delegates to vote for Human Rights in 1970.

Rev. James M. Young, Pastor
Grace United Methodist Church
Bangor, Maine

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SEEKING COMMON GROUND. WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD.
ELSIE L. KLINGMAN was born in Louisville, Kentucky, September 7, 1883, the daughter of Baden immigrants. Her father, Dr. Fred L. Klingman was a successful Louisville dentist. On 24 May 1904, Elsie Klingman married Arthur Guy Carleton Libby, a gentleman whose ancestors had been settled in York County, Maine, for more than 250 years.

Arthur Libby brought his wife to Kennebunk, Maine, where she opened her tea room and filled it with unique southern flavor, charm, and elegance.

Libby's opened in 1920. Two years later the Kentucky Riding Club was started with thirteen fine saddle horses. On October 2, 1922, lightning struck a tree near the stable, passed to an iron hitching ring, then through a stall window, killing one horse, caused mahem along the railroad trestle, and took the life of a member of the railroad crew sent to rescue the horses. Libby's Tea Room was rebuilt and re-opened the following summer and, until it closed in 1942 was a landmark on the Kennebunk-Wells town line.

In 1980, columnist Ellen Warren Willis wrote an affectionate article for the Maine Sunday Telegram entitled "Tea Room too dear for Roosevelt," in which she described Libby's Tea Room in its heyday.

"Place settings of Rose Medallion china adorned tables. There was a special dining area in the back for chauffeurs of the illustrious guests whose Rolls Royces and Packards frequented the parking lot. Prices were at the time exorbitant. When president Franklin D. Roosevelt dined there be ordered the chicken. We're told he thought the lobster dinner was too expensive."

Before he died in 1942, Arthur G.C. Libby bought many hundreds of acres of land in and around Wells, Maine. Following his death, Elsie continued to buy even more land. At the time of her death, Elsie Libby owned about 1,000 acres of land on both sides of US Route 1 in Kennebunk and Wells.

Legends concerning Elsie Libby abound. Evidently she did not permit chauffeurs to dine with regular customers; there was a place for them out back. She is said to have paid her waitresses a meager $3.00 a day. Apparently she had no great love for the IRS. On a tax notice found among her papers is a notation, "Infernal Revenue - and I don’t mean maybe." Although Elsie Libby had little use for organized religion, she considered herself a religious person. She would sit on her front porch and listen to religious broadcasts on the radio, including the MCC broadcast "Church School of the Air." In her later years, she grazed sheep on the land beside her house some yards from the former Tea Room which still housed her impressive antiques collection.

When Elsie sold Vaughn's Island in Kennebunk for $10,750 in September 1970, she noted in her log book: "a group of women are buying it to keep it from being built up."

SEEKING COMMON GROUND. WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD.
A place to ride, A place to eat,
A place that's new, Yet filled with antiques,
In fact, it's a difficult place to beat.

- A guest from
Toledo, Ohio
(ca. 1920)

**Special Chicken Dinner** 1.25
- Chicken Soup
- Tomato Juice
- Fruit Juice
- Fried Spring Chicken (Jointed)
- French Fried Potatoes
- Garden Vegetable
- Green Salad or Fruit Gelatin Salad
- Hot Biscuit
- Cornbread
- Hot Gingerbread with Whipped Cream
- Ice Cream
- Coffee

**Special Lobster Dinner** 1.50
- Steamed Clams, Drawn Butter, Bouillon
- Toasted Crackers
- Hot or Cold Boiled Lobster, Drawn Butter
- Chips
- Green Salad
- Hot Biscuit
- Cheese and Crackers
- Ice Cream
- Coffee

**Broiled Sirloin Steak**
- French Fried Potatoes
- Garden Vegetable
- Hot Biscuit
- Hot Gingerbread with Whipped Cream
- Ice Cream

**Baked Live Lobster** 1.75
- Steamed Clams, drawn Butter, Bouillon
- Toasted Crackers
- Chips
- Green Salad
- Hot Biscuit
- Coffee

The Original Libby's Menu 1920-1922.

Following the 1922 fire, the “new” Libby’s featured a varied menu that included chicken dinner for $1.25, “special” lobster dinner for $1.50 or baked live lobster for $1.75.

Desserts included Hot Gingerbread with Whipped Cream (25 cents), Old Fashioned Shortcake (35 cents), Berries in Season with Heavy Cream (30 cents), or Ice Cream (15 cents). Coffee, tea, and milk cost 10 cents. Iced coffee or iced tea cost 20 cents. A pint of Ginger Ale or White Rock Water with cracked ice could be had for 50 cents.

The “New” Libby’s Menu - after 1922

SEEKING COMMON GROUND. WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD.
ELSIE LIBBY’S BEQUEST

Elsie Libby’s Will:
May 18, 1961

BE IT REMEMBERED, That
I, Elsie L. Libby, of Wells,
in the County of York, State
of Maine, being of lawful age
and of sound and disposing
mind and memory, but mindful
of the uncertainty of life,
do make, publish and declare
this my last will and testa-
ment hereby revoking all
former wills made by me.

After the payment of my just
debts, funeral charges and
expenses of administration,
I dispose of my estate, as
follows:

FIRST: I give and devise to
Maine Council of Churches, a
corporation organized under
the laws of the State of Maine
and having its principal of-
office at Portland, in the
County of Cumberland, in said
State, all real estate and
all interests in real estate
which I shall own at the time
of my decease, and which
shall be situated in the
County of York, in said
State, and which shall be
situated elsewhere, to have
and to hold the same to it
and its successors and as-
signs forever.

....

IN TESTAMENT WITNESS, I have
subscribed my name in the
margin of the seven preced-
ing pages and hereunto set
my hand and seal and declare
this to be my last will and
testament, this eighteenth
day of May, in the year of
our Lord one thousand nine
hundred and sixty-one, at
Portland, Maine.

[Signature]

ELSIE LIBBY was not a church-going woman,
but she admired the work of Marion Ulmer and the
Maine Council of Churches' "Church School of the
Air."

It was because of Marion Ulmer that in 1961, when
Elsie Libby made out her will, she bequeathed the bulk
of her estate to the Maine Council of Churches. If
that fact was known by anyone at the Council in 1961,
it had been long forgotten by 1973.


On September 30, 1973, Rev. Bruce Roberts re-
ceived a telephone call. As Rev. Roberts reported it: "The telephone rang and I was asked if I was
President of the Maine Council of Churches....
Fortunately I was guarded in my answer, for I was
to hear that Elsie L. Libby had died and the Coun-
cil was the sole beneficiary of her will, which
would amount to a million and a half dollars. I
did two things right at that time. I didn't say 'No'
and I called our lawyer...."

For the Maine Council of Churches
a new day was about to dawn.

In 1974, Elsie Libby's former home was leased for a
year to Tatnic Hill Environmental School. In 1985,
the house and land on which it stands were sold to
William and Jo Johnson.

SEEKING COMMON GROUND. WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

24
For more than a generation Elsie Libby's gift of land to the Maine Council of Churches has made it possible for the Council to expand its mission. As various parcels of land were sold, assets from sales were carefully invested in order to ensure that the current work might be sustained and that its ability to serve congregations would be preserved for generations to come.

In 1982, 87 acres of land was sold to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to add to the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in the Town of Wells. Another 157 acres was sold to the Service in 1991.

In 1994, the Council sold land on U.S. Route 1, Wells, to the newly forming Messiah Christian Church.

In 2001, Johnson's museum (formerly Libby's Tea Room), was added to the National Registry of Historic Places.

Interior of Johnson Hall Museum as it appears today (2008)

Since 1980, the former Libby's Tea Room building has been operated as Johnson Hall Museum, an antiques auction house and curios museum by William L. Johnson, an old friend of Elsie Libby. At the time Elsie's personal property was put up for auction, Bill Johnson acquired a number of items that had been part of Elsie Libby's antiques collection and they are now part of his museum collection. The Johnson Hall Museum houses a wondrous collection of curios, antiques, musical instruments, weather vanes, statuary, vintage furniture, lamps, artifacts, and photographs representing Johnson's eclectic tastes and passion for preserving all things old. Like Elsie Libby, William Johnson is a self-proclaimed eccentric. He says that there is a story to be told about every item in his museum.

The painting above the mantel of the double fireplace is of Elsie V. Libby, daughter of Arthur and Elsie Libby, in her attire as a horsewoman with the Kentucky Riding Club. Elsie V. (Libby) Spencer died in Los Angeles 1963, and her ashes buried at Forest Lawn Cemetery, Glendale, California. At one time, she was said to have been a cartoonist with Walt Disney Productions.

In 2007, the final parcel of land was sold to the Preachers' Aid Society of New England which is developing Jesse Lee Village, the name honoring Maine's pioneer Methodist circuit rider. Twenty-three single family cottages for retired United Methodist clergy are being built.

Under the terms of the final sale, a Memorial Trail and Marker is to be created on the property in memory of Elsie L. Libby whose generosity gave the Maine Council of Churches new life.

St. David's Episcopal Church, Kennebunk

In 1989, St. David's Episcopal Church purchased land from the Maine Council of Churches to build its new home on U.S. Route 1 in Kennebunk.

Seeking Common Ground. Working for the Common Good.