



Telling Our Stories

250 Years of United Methodism
in the New York Area

1766-2016 www.nyac.com/250years



Image courtesy of the General Commission on Archives and History

Activist for the Social Gospel, Community Organizer and Poet

1850-1935

Frank Mason North

Rev. Dr. Frank Mason North was raised a Methodist in New York City. He served six congregations in the NYAC before taking on programmatic duties.

The Social Gospel and Christian Socialism were the themes of his life. He wrote extensively about both, saying, “Only, then, when the church acts from the conviction that Christianity relates itself to the life both of the individual and of the community, can its true mission be accomplished. It must cure its fevered patient and at the same time drain the marsh where lurk the germs of the disease.”

In 1887, Dr. North became the corresponding secretary of the New York City Church Extension and Missionary Society, the predecessor of today’s City Society. He helped develop churches as community centers and oversaw programs for poor, multi-racial, and immigrant communities.

He was a founder of the Methodist Federation for Social Service in 1907 and helped organize the Federal Council of Churches in America in 1908. In 1912, he moved to the Board of Missions where he continued his ecumenical activities.

North also was a poet, authoring Hymn 427 “Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life.”

For Discussion

- Should the church just focus on saving souls or does it need to be involved in community/social action too?
- How important is the Social Gospel in today’s world?
- What activities does the United Methodist Church undertake to further the Social Gospel?
- How do Christianity and Socialism relate?

New York Annual Conference
Commission on Archives and History
C. Wesley Christman Archives
archives@nyac.com - 914-615-2241