

**Henry Locke**

Westminster Church Center Wars on

THE WESTMINSTER HOUSE at 421 Monroe St., a social center in the area bounded by Genesee, Pine, William and Fillmore is serving about 100 free breakfasts to elementary school pupils each morning before school.

Robert E. Coleman, the director, said with the aid of funds from United Way, the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 724 Delaware Ave., and the Presbytery of Western New York, the center is equipped to serve a maximum of 150 breakfasts each day.

He said that some preschool children are served meals when they come in with older sisters and brothers and occasionally junior high school students are served if the total number of children for that day is less than the 150 maximum.

THE BREAKFASTS were started in 1969 by the Black Student Union at the University of Buffalo.

Coleman said the center also receives additional funds for the breakfasts from the American Freedom From Hunger Foundation, contributing from various organizations and individual donations.

"Some of the money raised through the March on Hunger annual campaign here is donated to keep the breakfast program going," he said.

Students from Nichols School, Rosary Hill College and members of the Westminster Presbyterian Church work as volunteers in the preparation and the serving of the breakfasts.

THE REV. CHARLES S. SMITH, program director of the center, said other programs are

helping to meet the need of the community among youths and adults as well.

They include a Head Start program, sponsored by the Task Force for Cooperative Metropolitan Ministry on the East Side and the Wider Horizon program that is designed to tutor elementary school children on the one-on-one basis.

Also offered are Bible classes, dancing, weaving, sewing, trips, a summer camp, basketball,

ping pong, billiards, crafts, volleyball and cooking classes for boys and girls.

The Rev. Mr. Smith said the programs are designed to serve the youths as well as the adults in their given boundaries.

SENIOR CITIZENS usually attend the center during the day when the youths are in school, and the activities offered are similar to those offered the youths.

"They are still interested in learning to cook special dishes; they enjoy Bible discussions and going to the Science Museum and some of them serve as volunteers in our youth programs," the clergyman said.

He said more than 200 youths attended the Westminster Summer Camp in Angola this summer and many more participated in trips to the Ontario Museum of Science in Toronto, the science and historical museum is here.

A health referral is part of the program offered at the center, the Rev. Mr. Smith said, and testing for sickle cell anemia and venereal disease also are conducted.

THE WESTMINSTER House was formed in 1894 when the community was predominantly German. The center supplied 55 German families with all their needs including medical care that year.

In 1896 recreation and athletic programs were started and in 1898 a branch library was instituted. That same library now is known as the Malcolm X Library in honor of the civil rights leader who was slain in 1965.

Also in 1898, the first kindergarten class in the center was started and in 1908 an employment office was started. That office was taken over by the New York State Employment Service in 1938.

The Westminster Presbyterian Church supplied all the financial support for the center

from its inception until 1965 when the Presbytery of Western New York certified the programs and started contributing financial support.

IN 1967 the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County joined in with financial support of the organization.

Presently, an integrated staff of 14 parttime employees, the director, program director and 10 volunteers administer the programs to an average of 200 persons five days a week. The center is closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

Hunger

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