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Bethinking of Old Orleans

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ECUMENICITY AT EASTER

If our special holidays, celebrations and festive occasions during the year don't do any more than bring people together, they at least accomplish more than we sometimes do the rest of the year. This picture taken by William Monacelli over thirty years ago suggests mutual cooperation, common congeniality and ecumenicity at its ultimate best. The common denominator here is Easter. Around 1947 Albion clergymen and church members got together to present an Easter play which was held at the First Presbyterian Church. These three ministers each had a part in that production which was entitled "Thy Son Liveth". Shown discussing their roles in the play they are from the left: Rev. George F. Dutton, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church 1943-1948, the Rev. Donald Lawson, minister of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church 1946-1951 and the Rev. Stanley Magill, minister of the First Free Methodist Church during the late 1940's. That in itself is quite a spread when looking at each minister from his perspective roll. For instance, the Episcopal Church comes down through the centuries as a Trinitarian tradition of liturgy. The liberal Universalist Church, organized just a little over 200 years ago preaching "God is Love" tends to reject Trinitarian theology. The Free Methodists however, on the other hand, believing in simplicity took a literal and fundamental approach to religion becoming Bible oriented only after having established themselves in 1859. Yet, they had a common denominator -- Easter. The late Rev. Kelsey Bicknell in a concise sermon to his congregation on Easter Sunday several years ago stated: "You are not here because of Easter -- Easter is here because of you." Again, as in the past we see people coming together now for almost 2000 years and Easter is here.