

Arkansas Methodist

92nd YEAR

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1973

NO. 37

'God's Plan for Saving the World'

Since our meeting just a year ago you and I have come to know each other much better. You've come to discover many things about me and I've come to discover many things about you. I can tell you now that you haven't learned even half of the bad things about me yet, but you will. But I have to say that what I have learned about you is that you are one of the most wonderful, dedicated groups of people that I ever hope to meet in the United Methodist Church. I thank God every morning when I get up that I am in this place and that God has, for some reason or other, given me the privilege of working with you. It's been a great year; it's been a year of wonderful privilege for Wilma and me, and we can honestly say that we have never been in any place where we have felt the spirit of God at work any more, and where we feel a real sincerity and earnestness of the people to want to love God and serve the world. And we not only thank you for this privilege, but I wanted to say to you tonight that that is what I have learned about you during this last year.



Bishop Frank

A "CLIMATE OF TRUST"

Now the only way I know how to work in the church is in a climate of trust. That is to say that I believe in the men — the pastors — whether they're men or women; I believe in the pastors we have serving churches in Arkansas. I believe that every person that I have met, and I have met now, I imagine, every pastor in the state — many of you I can call by name, the rest of you I will, believe me in a very short time — and I have yet to meet anyone whom I do not believe is doing his utmost to be a man of God, to be a servant of the people, to be a pastor to his people; to help his people to become the church in his community. I have to work in that kind of atmosphere and climate of trust; and there isn't anything hypocritical about it as far as I'm concerned. I really mean it, and I really believe it. I believe that every man we've appointed to a church is doing his dead-level best to be a man of God, to be a good pastor to his people.

I believe that every one of our superintendents is doing the same kind of job. I believe that he is earnestly trying to be a man of God himself and that he is trying to be a pastor to his people and that he is trying to be the kind of energizing force within the district to help every pastor fulfill the highest that God has in mind for that pastor.

"GOD'S PLAN FOR SAVING THE WORLD"

Now last year at this very moment and place I tried to outline for you as best I could my own conception of the basic premise of our work together. And I am just going to remind you tonight very briefly that I tried to tell you that for me the basic premise of our work together has to be that the local congregation is God's plan for the saving of the world; that he has no other plan in mind than the building up of his people in families, in households, in fellowships of the faith that we call a local congregation.

I tried to say last year that to me the basic premise of our working together as districts and as annual conferences is that this local congregation is the heart and the center of God's plan to save the world. It's God's plan to reveal his son to the world in this household of faith. And I went on to try to indicate to you that it seems to me that this household of faith, this family of God, is doing the work to which God calls it when it is ministering with love and compassion and pastoral concern to members of the family.

And secondly, when it is seeking with all of its power and dynamic everyone in the community who is uncommitted to Jesus Christ, or those who are committed to other gods. These are by far more numerous: people who are already more committed to money or to power in the community. People who are committed to other gods. But that congregation is in mission when it is seeking with all its energy to reach the uncommitted and to reach those who are committed to something else beside Jesus Christ.

The third thing I tried to say was that that local congregation is in mission when it is seeking to transform the community in which it exists and to bring that community to a new sense of justice for all sorts and conditions of people; to bring that community to a new image of itself as a place where people can live in peace and in something beside poverty — seeking to transform the community so that it becomes a more liveable, a more loving place in which all sorts and conditions of people can live.

And finally that a church is in mission when it is opening its eyes to its responsibility for the world at large. We are living in a smaller and smaller world all the time and we have a responsibility for people everywhere in the world.

Well these were the four things that I tried to say about this local congregation which I conceive to be the center, the heart, of God's plan for saving the world.

"WHERE IS AUTHORITY TODAY?"

Well, from that point of course, this requires a style of leadership that locates authority in the leading of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community, not in an external hierarchy, whether it be a bishop or a superintendent or a board or a commission or whatever. It requires a theology that locates the authority of the Spirit in the work of the Holy Spirit within that Christian community, not in any kind of external authority.

If you were in class yesterday morning you heard me ask Virgil Sexton this question. But you see, I didn't have time to wait for his answer. I don't know whether he gave it this morning or not. I didn't get to be there this morning, but I asked the question yesterday and I hope to get his answer before we leave this week.

Where is authority today? I had to venture out on a limb here to say what I have said. But as I have contemplated this whole question I have come to the conclusion that what we are facing in the world today requires — that is, the position of the church today, the condition of God's household and how we're going to work with the people of God to build the church of Christ in the world — that we have to locate authority in the leading of the Holy Spirit in the work and in the lives of the Christian community.

NOTE: The address which follows was delivered by Bishop Eugene M. Frank to the ministers during the Arkansas Pastors' School at Hendrix College on Tuesday evening, Sept. 11. In the statement Bishop Frank reflects upon his message of one year ago when assigned to this episcopal area and then speaks to basic issues before the church. We believe it will be of interest to all our readers.

-The Editor

"WHAT IS THIS CHURCH IN BUSINESS FOR?"

It requires a process of planning, and not a rigid formula or a plan that comes to that congregation from outside of its own body. It requires each local church to write out its purpose for existence. And I mean "write it out," as Virgil said yesterday morning. I don't mean to "think about it" or to say "yes, we know what we're in business for," but I mean write it out: "What is this church in business for?" And it's a purpose that must be revised, sometimes monthly, sometimes semi-annually, certainly annually, as that local church contemplates over and over again what we really are in business for.

And this requires of course that an annual conference write such a purpose. And that purpose, in my humble judgment, must be derived from the purposes that come up from the local congregation. It can't be something separated from this local church. It can't be something alienated from it. It's got to be derived from what the local congregation conceives to be its mission, under God, in the community. The annual conference must have a purpose for its existence.

"THE RELOCATION OF AUTHORITY"

The relocation of authority requires that our budget for an annual conference be determined by a council of ministries as it plans how the purpose of the conference can best be fulfilled; not determined by boards and commissions, but determined by a council of ministries whose job is to help the conference fulfill its purpose that it has carefully worked out so that it knows why its in business.

The relocation of authority, dear friends is a reality. In our lifetime it will never be again a monolithic church structure. It will be located in the leading of the Holy Spirit in the community of Christians. If authority today is in erosion, which everybody knows it is, when it comes to rest, I believe its going to come to rest in the leading and working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian community.

WHAT "STYLE OF LEADERSHIP" REQUIRED?

In a church like this, in an annual conference like this, what style of leadership is called for? And here I want to speak from a text. And when I use the word in this text — when I use the word "man" — believe me, it's inclusive; it includes "women of the opposite sex." When I use the word "John," I am not referring to Dr. John Brokhoff; I am not referring to anybody present whose name happens to be John. That's you, John. But it just so happens that the text reads like this: "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." Now the first part of that text is a very challenging one. "There was a man."

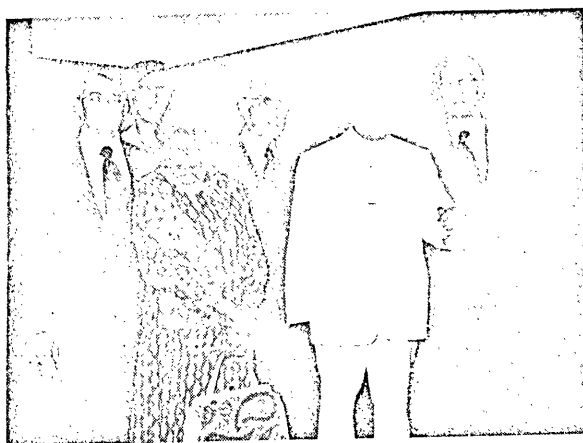
GOD CHOOSES MEN

I've often wondered why God chose men in the first place to carry his message to the world. I've often thought it would have been much better if he had sent the archangel to stand on the Capitol dome in Washington and deliver his message from that vantage point; that people might have believed it more. Or if he had sent the archangel to the top of the cathedral in Kremlin square, Red Square, in Moscow. Maybe he could have gotten his message

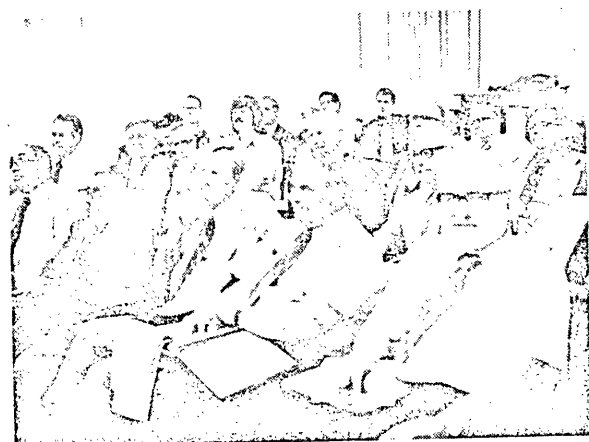
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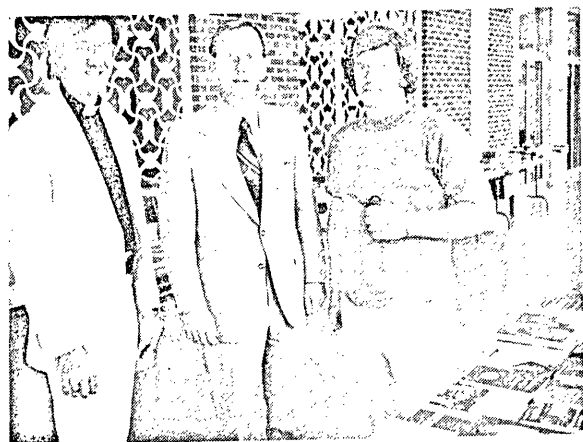
The Rev. N. Lee Cate, superintendent of Mt. Sequoyah Assembly; the Rev. Robert O. Beck, associate director, Little Rock Conference Council on Ministries and dean of the Pastors' School; the Rev. John B. Hays, Lakewood; and the Rev. Milton D. Nelson, Maumelle, New Zion and Union Chapel, visit on Hendrix campus during Pastors' School.



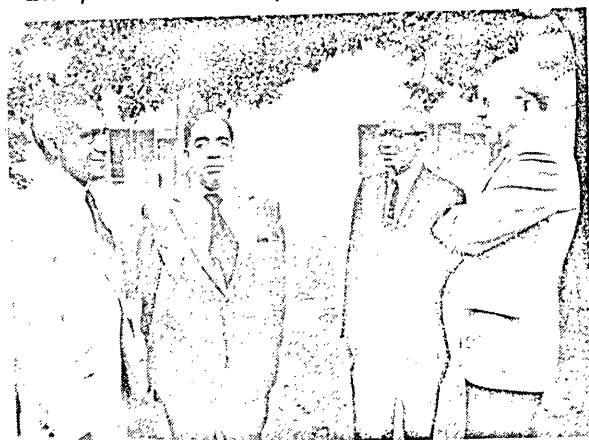
Dr. Ira B. Loud, pastor of St. Paul Church in Dallas and preacher for the week at Pastors' School, and Mrs. Loud, are seen after the Tuesday evening service with worship leaders (from left) the Rev. Gerald K. Fincher, Mabelvale, and the Rev. Robert M. Van Hook II, Henderson, Little Rock; the Rev. James E. Major, Hendrix vice president and Dr. Matt L. Ellis, former Hendrix president.



"Doctrinal Standards of The United Methodist Church" was one subject of study at the Pastors' School. Shown above is one section of this course, taught by Dr. Emerson Colaw, pastor of Hyde Park Church, Cincinnati, Ohio.



Visiting at the Cokesbury book display at the Arkansas Pastors' School last week are (from left) the Rev. Robert M. Van Hook II, Henderson Church, Little Rock; the Rev. Merle A. Johnson, Jr., First Church, Siloam Springs; and the Rev. Samuel L. Albright, manager of the Dallas Cokesbury store and member of the Little Rock Conference.



The Rev. T. E. Snow, Haven-Caddo Gap; the Rev. Elijah L. Morgan, Mark Chapel, Little Rock; the Rev. Lloyd Smith, St. Mark-Carthage-Hensley; and the Rev. George G. Meyer, Grand Avenue, Stuttgart, visit during Pastors' School.



The parsonage of Conway's First Church was the scene of a reception honoring the faculty and pastors on Tuesday evening of Pastors' School. Sharing the hosting duties were (from left) Conway District Superintendent Dr. J. Ralph Clayton and Mrs. Clayton; the Rev. and Mrs. Britt H. Cordell, Wesley-Vilonia; the Rev. and Mrs. James M. McKay, Jr., Wesley Foundation, SCA; Mrs. James E. Major, Conway, wife of Hendrix vice president; and Dr. and Mrs. Harold O. Eggensperger, First Church, Conway.

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across there.

But the amazing mystery of God's working with his children is that he chooses men. And the explanation of it must have something to do with the nature of God's truth, which never exists in a vacuum but always has something to do with persons. God's truth always gains a special validity and authenticity from having been wrung out of man's own doubts and uncertainties.

The greatest truths you and I enunciate are those that come out of our own agonies; out of the agony in our family, out of the sorrow in our family, out of those shaking experiences that force us to rethink and to re-pray and to restate our conceptions of God. And out of those agonies there is wrung out a message that is far more vital, far more relevant and meaningful to people than even a message from the archangel himself.

WHAT MAKES A PROPHET?

One of the professors at Garrett—I did not get to hear, but I read many of his books—in one of his books on prophetic preaching Professor Otto Baab—had a little statement that has always thrilled me. And it was so simple. He said "a great prophet is just an ordinary man who knows where to put up his lightning rod." What a statement that is! And yet, who dares to be the lightning rod, you see, God help me, I'm not sure I want to be burned up that way. A lightning rod takes the punishment of the sky; it takes the punishment of the lightning. And to know where to put your lightning rod so that the power of God strikes it, Otto Baab says, is to be a prophet.

But I think what he's saying, too, is that the greatest message that comes through us to people is the message that is wrung out of our own experience. It's refined there and if it's anything else, it's apt to be very superficial. God's truth and word are spoken out of a man's mouth and life to point the moral that if the messenger can make it his own, if the messenger can understand it and obey it then

anybody else can. And believe me that's important. We'll understand, at least ourselves, what we mean; and if we understand it there is a possibility that somebody else will.

Well, you know how true this is in the Bible. God once announced that he was going to send a great flood and destroy every living thing. Now there wasn't anybody more interested in this than the people who were going to be destroyed. But God didn't announce it to the people; he just announced it to one poor man: Noah. And Noah tried to tell other people but they didn't listen very well so he had to build the ark all by himself.

God announced that he was going to set his people free in Egypt. But the people who were most interested in this, the pharaoh, the Egyptian slave-masters, didn't get the message at all. God went way out in the desert and found a lonely man out there and set a bush on fire and announced to this lonely man that he was going to set his people free from bondage.

It's real interesting, isn't it, the way God uses men. "There was a man."

SALVATION COMES FROM "OUTSIDE"

Well, the second part of the text is that he was sent from God. I particularly like this part of the text because implicit in the word "sent" is the recognition that the source of the mission is outside, not inside. In one sense the preacher is always an agent. He comes into a situation from the outside and then sooner or later he tears up his roots and moves on, leaving aside those abrasive encounters between preacher and people that are brought to an end with sighs of relief all around. It's really a very painful experience, both for the people and for the preacher to have to break these relationships which he has established. And yet in a true sense the preacher of the Word is always an agent. He is always coming to the congregation from the outside to the inside.

The semi-nomadic life of the preacher proclaims the central biblical truth that our salvation always

comes from outside ourselves. This is the way it is. Salvation comes to us from another, from outside. It takes someone else to open our prison cell to release us. There is no way out without help. No one ever thought his way through to Christ by cunning mental exercise or by all the studious application in the world; someone had to tell him, or better still show him, Christ, before he knew him. No one ever became more Christ-like by trying to be good or by showing himself to be better than others. And no one ever comes to Christ on his own merits. Someone has to reach out a hand when a man cries "Lord, help me." Someone has to reach out a hand.

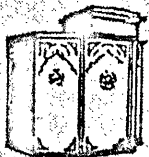
GOD USES HUMAN BEINGS

The means by which any people's salvation is accomplished is meant and determined to shatter all of our illusions of self sufficiency. "Sent from God," because God cannot permit us even one iota of self sufficiency. Because the minute we get ahold of this it grows like a terrible malignancy until it becomes pride. Then it becomes arrogance. And then it becomes pure unadulterated selfishness. And so God fixes it so that your salvation and mine must come to us from the outside, from somebody who sets us free.

Saving truth does not well up like a spring in a congregation. It does not dawn upon their minds with a kind of universal apprehension. It must break in from the outside. It must be "brought to" the congregation. This is what the incarnation means. We say that "the tabernacle of God is with man," but it has not always been so. There was a point in history when time was cloven into and God decisively entered to save. This is the incarnation. God announced to Mary "You will give birth to a son." The mystery of his coming is that salvation for man is not within, it is without.

We are not going to build God's kingdom on earth because we apply rational, inventive tech-

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From the Bottom of the Heart.....

In keeping with our historic Methodist tradition of freedom of speech and responsibility in speaking, what appears here is the editor's point of view and not necessarily the official position of The United Methodist Church. Responses from our readers are invited. (See "From Our Readers" column, Page 9)

THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN SO MUCH

There are phantoms that hover around every pulpit in our land. In absentia they walk the streets of every parish, they travel every circuit, they pastor every charge. They are the spirits of those who have served well their Lord and their fellowman as ministers in the church.

Many, many of these have transferred to "the church triumphant in heaven" and in this relationship are still among us, a part of our family and heritage, surrounding us as so great a cloud of witnesses. Others — our retired ministers — are not only a beloved part of the fellowship of "the church militant on earth," but remain a vital part of its Christian ministry.

THE NEEDS OF OUR RETIRED MINISTERS

At least two of our conferences are giving special attention at this time to the needs of our retired ministers. Many of these former pastors (and/or their widows and dependents) are among a large group of persons who are victims of the economic hardships of our time. They would not want to be singled out as different in this respect from great numbers of other retired persons who, on limited retirement incomes, have a hard time making the inflated dollar meet even minimal needs.

We should be concerned about all such groups of persons. But we have a special responsibility to be concerned about the needs of our own retired ministers, for we are the ones to whom they rightly look for their due retirement benefits.

Consider the circumstances faced by retired ministers in our three conferences. For a minister who has served the church for 40 years the following current figures apply in these conferences:

Little Rock and North Arkansas: Forty years of service at a \$61 annuity rate provides an annual retirement of \$2,440 (about \$203 per month).

Louisiana: Forty years of service at a \$70 annuity rate provides an annual retirement of \$2,800 (about \$233 per month).

A RESPONSIBILITY TOO LONG POSTPONED

While a high percentage of ministers retiring during the past twelve to fifteen years (approximately) are receiving Social Security benefits, most of those who retired before this period are not. Whichever may be the case, we have a long way to go as a church to rightly provide for those who have given so much and have received so little materially.

Our boards of pensions have been diligent in pointing up these deficiencies across the years, but our conferences have given priority to other pressing needs and have postponed proper attention to this vital area of our responsibility.

This fact makes it even more important that the Little Rock Conference's Ministers' Reserve Pension Fund, now before our local churches for attention in their budgets, receive our heartiest support. The same is true for the program of the Louisiana Conference Retired Minister's Homes Board, which renders a vital service in providing retirement homes at nominal rental rates.

Such causes should not have to be "sold" to United Methodists. It should be enough that we simply be reminded of the need.

Lord of the harvest, hear
Thy needy servants' cry;

Answer our faith's effectual prayer,
And all (their) needs supply.

—Charles Wesley (Hymn # 339)

Then, when their work is finished here,
In humble hope their charge resign.

When the chief Shepherd shall appear,
O God, may they and we be thine.

—James Montgomery (Hymn #337)

J.S.W.

Off the Top of the Head.....

Change our seasons

I believe it was Thoreau who said that the human ear is far too frail an instrument to perceive the first faint footfalls of approaching spring. A true and beautiful statement.

But I think that I heard with my heart the other evening one, at least, of the first subtle approaches of fall. And it was a lovely experience.

It was late in the evening and I was at work in the study at home when I became conscious of the wind in the oak tree just outside the window. Nothing unique about this, I know. But the sound was definitely not that of a summer wind. It was a fleet, momentary gust that rustled the green leaves on the old oak and made them sound almost as if they were dry and brown.

It didn't last long, this sound. But the feeling did; a definite harbinger of fall, an emissary sent to announce the changing of the seasons.

And with this brief, delicious interruption, wind chimes in my head were set in melodious motion. Suddenly — in quick, delightful succession — I was in a cabin in the mountains of western Arkansas . . . on a high mountain pass in the Colorado Rockies . . . on a windy beach at night in Oregon . . . on the blustery shores of Lake Michigan, in Illinois, a child.

How mysterious, marvelous and magic are the ways of man's mind! And how full of wonder is his world. And how wise the Bible, that when it speaks of the spirit of God, the comparison is with the wind.

Blow over us, winds of God. Bathe us, refresh us, stir us.

And change our seasons: from those of war to peace; from selfishness to benevolence; from fear to faith; from self to others; from division to unity; from estrangement to love.

†

"Let me read this one just one more time"

At the Little Rock Conference Lay Men's Assembly, former Conference Lay Leader Roland E. Shelton presented Bishop Aubrey G. Walton, the speaker of the evening, with a most appropriate and gracious introduction. In responding, Bishop Walton said he enjoyed the experience and that it reminded him of a story that Mrs. E. T. Wayland told on Dr. Wayland, former editor of THE METHODIST.

When Dr. Wayland retired, Bishop Walton related, friends from over the conference and from across the church at large sent letters of appreciation to him, which letters were bound into a volume. Mrs. Wayland complained to her husband that he spent too much time reading from this book. His response: "Next to the Scriptures it's the most satisfying reading I can find."

†

That's playing it real safe.....

It should be encouraging to women's libbers that the terminology of the movement is catching on. Instead of "chairman" it is now chairperson, etc., etc. We received in the office this week one more such sign. The salutation of the letter was: "Dear Person."

†

One more from the old philosopher:

"Have you heard the latest move by the women's lib group? They're insisting that our prayers now be ended with "Awomen."

—Matt Locke Ellis, August 4, A.D. 1973

†

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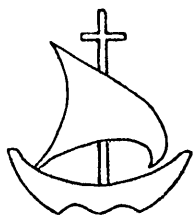
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Editorial and business offices: United Methodist Headquarters Bldg., 715 Center Street, Little Rock, Ark. ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE to Box 3547, Little Rock, Ark., 72203. Articles other than editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE — \$3.00 per year
Published every Thursday except weeks of July 4 and Dec. 25 at United Methodist Hdqrs. Bldg., Little Rock, Ark. Second class postage paid at Little Rock, Ark. When asking for change of address please include key number, new and old address and pastor's name.

POSTMASTER: MAIL FORM 3579 to Box 3547, Little Rock, Ark., 72203.
MEMBER: Associated Church Press, United Methodist Press Association, and news sources including United Methodist Communications (UMC), United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, National Council of Churches, and Religious News Service (RNS).

ADVERTISING RATES on request. Represented nationally by Jacob's List, Inc., Clinton, S. C. 29325.



news and views

OF THE WORLD OF RELIGION

by doris woolard

A Causeway for Peace Building to be sponsored by Church Women United, an ecumenical organization, will begin Feb. 1, 1974 for the purpose of bringing North American and Asian Christian women together in exploring ways to foster peace. A delegation of American women will travel to Hong Kong and there divide into four caravans — one each to Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand, where women will host the respective caravans. Following study-action programs the caravans and women from the host nations will meet in Japan on Feb. 22 for a Consultation on Peace Building. CAUSEWAY '74 will have its climax in Hiroshima on March 1, the World Day of Prayer.

A "We Protest" campaign launched in May by Christian Herald magazine to determine its readers' views on TV programming brought such an overwhelming response the editors had to close the project. They noted that more than 160,000 Americans had supported the magazine's protest "against the degrading misuse of sex and the exploitation of violence on television. This makes it the most massive expression that Christian Herald has ever received on a moral or social issue." The editors said "the protests continue to arrive, but we think we have now made the point." They said results of the protests "are being brought to the attention of television officials, advertising agencies, members of Congress and to the press."

"Never, gentlemen," said Christian Herald, addressing itself to media and advertising officials, "underestimate the purchasing power of those Americans who represent the moral and financial backbone of this country. They are men and women who have a respect for their homes and families that most Americans once had." "Home, to them, is not a place to sit down while deciding where to go next. It is not up for grabs. It is the center of life, a place of sharing, a safe haven for the family. Television programs that come as an intruder rather than as a welcome guest do not belong here and will not be tolerated."

Dr. David W. Preus, returning from his first World Council of Churches' meeting (in Geneva, Switzerland), said: "It is always a touchy matter to determine the balance between the socio-political and the theological and liturgical." "It points up for me the necessity of Churches with different geographical and political settings being able to sit together and debate these matters," said the American Lutheran Church leader, adding that the World Council does "a great amount of work along traditional lines, including evangelism and aid to the needy," but this has not caught the public eye in the way attention is given to WCC actions on political issues.

Seven top leaders of Key 73, in an exclusive interview with a Religious News Service writer, conceded that the broad-based evangelistic drive, which has the theme "Calling Our Continent to Christ," has not developed as originally planned. But they were vigorous in their disagreement over some assessments that have labeled the effort a "failure" eight months after formal launching. "They asserted that the drive had produced a new coalition whose diverse participants will never go home to old isolation," the writer said. Dr. Joe Hale, United Methodist, said at least half of the 40,000 United Methodist congregations were involved in some way in Key 73.

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The Canadian Catholic Conference issued a Labor Day message condemning society's "jungle rule" and North America's emphasis on buying power. "In our society," it said, "buying power has become a widely accepted symbol of social status. As a consequence, there is now a psychological as well as a material gap between the rich and the poor, between those who supposedly 'succeed' and those who supposedly 'fail.'"

Britain's government has rejected a new move seeking relief for the Churches from the Value Added Tax (VAT), which was introduced when Britain joined the European Common Market this year. It is estimated that the tax will cost the Churches \$5 million or more annually. VAT imposes a 10 per cent charge on all goods and services and replaces the Purchase Tax, which had been imposed on goods only.

Cardinal Francois Marty of Paris told 15,000 persons participating in a religious pilgrimage that he hoped no country in the world would allow Danish film maker Jens Joergen Thorsen to use its territory to make an erotic film about Jesus Christ. He expressed gratitude to the French government for banning the projected filming in Southern France. There have been hints that official Danish support for the film may be withdrawn. Thorsen is said to be considering Cuba, Yugoslavia and possibly North Africa as locations for filming.

Dedicated to "revitalizing interest in Scripture as the living word of God," a new feature entitled The Burning Word will be launched in the October issue of The Bible Today, a periodical published in Collegeville, Minn. "I can't imagine a more overdue or unexplored opportunity to immerse both leaders and loners in a study of the word of God oriented to integrating their real world and the scriptural world," said Father James Reese, of St. John's University, Jamaica, N. Y., who will edit the feature. The series title is taken from the question raised in St. Luke 24:32: "Were not our hearts burning inside us as He talked to us and explained the Scriptures to us?"

Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I of Constantinople (Istanbul), spiritual leader of world Eastern Orthodoxy, in a message to the World Council of Churches' 120-member Central Committee, urged the Council not to let "new endeavors" in social, economic and political fields overshadow theological interests or divert it from its religious goals.

Entering its 100th anniversary year the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union passed a slate of resolutions aimed at "bringing order out of confusion." In a resolution on education, the WCTU urged school administrators and teachers, churches and other agencies to "institute a stepped-up narcotics education program based on scientific facts, and emphasizing prevention through total abstinence as the only means of eliminating alcoholism."

First Baptist Church of Hammond, Ind. has received a citation from Christian Life magazine for having America's largest and fastest growing Sunday school. It was noted that the church has had an increase of 1,920 in average weekly Sunday School attendance during the past year, and that its average attendance is now 7,837.

The Program Agency of the United Presbyterian Church voted in Chicago to appeal a denominational decision which would cut its 1974 budget by 35 per cent. Such a reduction would endanger many familiar mission activities and mean the total abandonment of some, according to the agency. United Presbyterian contributions for 1972 reached an all-time high last year, but gifts for work under the Mission Council were down substantially—a general trend among members in mainline Protestant Churches, of giving more but making less available for national and international operations.

A conference on death, bereavement and widowhood, sponsored by the Council of Churches of Greater Washington and Jewish, Catholic and other organizations will be held at George Washington University, Sept. 22. Discussion will cover the terminal patient, the unexpected death, funeral customs, bereavement, the problem of being widowed and estate planning. There are now more than 12 million widows in this country, according to a report by the Nat'l. Institute of Mental Health.

According to the Army Chief of Chaplains, army chaplains in Europe, through chapel programs, were helping young soldiers and their families hard-hit by the dollar devaluation long before their plight was brought to public attention by news media. Chaplain (Major General) Gerhardt W. Hyatt said that a "sponsorship program" was set up at Army installations in Europe (especially in Germany) with wives of senior officers and non-commissioned officers sponsoring young Army wives on a one-to-one basis soon after their arrival. The program is being conducted by "Women of the Chapel" units (comprised mainly of older military wives) under supervision of local chaplains.

In a message beamed over the American Forces Network to military posts throughout the world, Mormon president Harold B. Lee told servicemen that those who appear best able to cope with the challenges and conflicts of military life are those who habitually handle problems "through prayer, through reverence, through calling upon God, our Eternal Father for strength. . . ."



WASHINGTON, D.C. — Sen. Harold E. Hughes (Iowa), a United Methodist layman, has announced that he will end his political career in late 1974 to work in Christian ministries. Instead of seeking re-election to a second six-year term, the 51-year-old legislator plans to work with the Fellowship Foundation of Washington and International Christian Leadership on problems of alcoholism, narcotics addiction, peace, justice, and brotherhood. A former governor of Iowa, Sen. Hughes joined Alcoholics Anonymous in 1952, and has been active in the temperance movement since kicking the habit. (RNS Photo)

SEPTEMBER 20, 1973

Bishop and Mrs. W. C. Martin in car accident

Bishop and Mrs. William C. Martin of Little Rock were in an automobile accident on Tuesday, Sept. 11 and have been hospitalized in Little Rock.

Mrs. Martin was badly bruised and shaken and suffered severe injuries to her teeth. She was released on Tuesday, Sept. 18 from Baptist Medical Center to the Medcenter in Little Rock.

Bishop Martin remains in the medical center. His major injuries were the fracture of six ribs, a mild concussion and severe cuts around his head. As we go to press the hospital reports his condition as fair and stable. Bishop Martin has been in the intensive care unit of the hospital, primarily because of the extreme pain resulting from the rib injuries. He is expected to remain in intensive care for the remainder of this week and following that will be hospitalized for probably two more weeks.

It is advised that Bishop Martin have no visitors at the present. Mail will reach him at the Baptist Medical Center, 1700 West 13th St., Little Rock, Ark. 72201. Mrs. Martin may be written at Medcenter of America, 5720 W. Markham, Little Rock, Ark. 72205.

†

North Arkansas Laity Board to meet

The Board of Laity of the North Arkansas Conference will meet on this next Sunday, Sept. 23, at the Ramada Inn in Conway. The chief item of business will be preliminary planning of the Laymen's Assembly for 1974.

Any members of the board who wish are invited, along with their wives, to attend the morning worship at 10:00 a.m. First Church in Conway at 10:00 a.m.

Henry M. Rainwater of Walnut Ridge is conference lay leader and associate conference lay leaders are Warren Blaylock of Alma, Dick Fikes of North Little Rock and Marvin Gaither of Batesville. Roy Weld of Fisher is the conference director of lay speaking.

District lay leaders are, by districts: Batesville, Marvin Gaither; Conway, James W. Lane, North Little Rock; Fayetteville, Dr. Russell Riggs, Rogers; Forrest City, Bob McGinnis, Marianna; Fort Smith, Leon W. Woolbright; Jonesboro, Charles Rasberry, Jonesboro; and Paragould, D. L. Henderson, Imboden.

†

NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST Church in Benton, located on Highway 35, one mile off Edison Ave., announces a revival to be held Sept. 24-28 at 7 p.m., with the Rev. Wayne Edwards of Dalark as guest evangelist. The Mid-South Gospel Singers will present music on Thursday night. The Rev. P. G. Poss is pastor.

†

Council Directors to Local Churches

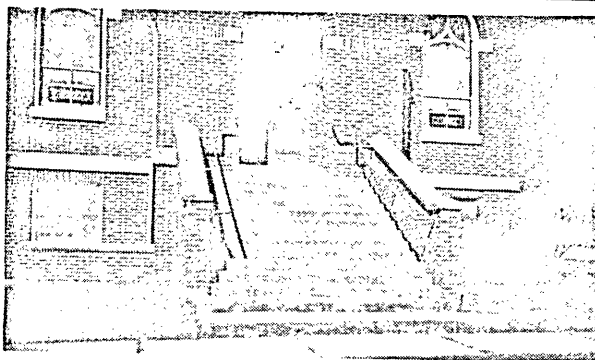
School days! There is a different hum in the atmosphere and, truly, one can sense a pace that is faster. Of course, one thinks in terms of students-individuals and masses of "moving" humanity-stretching, struggling, striving. They gain and capture our attention, sometimes, to the point they knock this over. They need our support, help, and strength.

Amid all this, however, I think it would be good to look at our teachers. They are persons too! With the assets, the joys, the hurts, and the pains that are common to mankind. Many serve in capacities that are supremely sacrificial. A friend of mine wrote a prayer that I think indicates the depth of commitment that many have that are involved in the ministry of teaching.

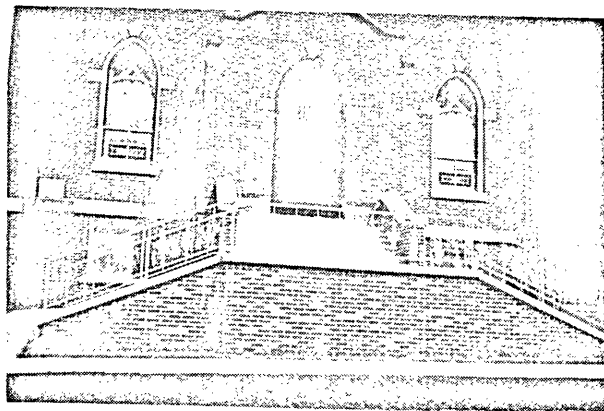
"Lord, I thank Thee for the chance to work at a task which makes the hours so full. Let me use those hours to guide the precious lives entrusted to my care in ways of goodness. Help me to be calm in the face of disturbance, kind to all regardless of circumstances, tolerant when understanding is lacking, and faithful in duties great and small. I pray for the strength of mind and body to do what is expected of me without losing my willing spirit. Forgive the mistakes I make this day and give me wisdom to correct them. In the name of the Great Teacher, I pray. Amen."

Thank God for teachers!

†



What to do about the "high front steps" (shown at left in "Before" photo) was a problem which for many years confronted the congregation at First United Methodist Church in Stamps.



The "After" photo at right shows how the building committee at the Stamps church - co-chaired by Harold Baker and Tom Heintz - solved the long-standing problem. The improvement was recently completed at a cost of \$4,100. The Rev. Robert W. Johnson is pastor.

from page two **GOD'S PLAN**

niques. We're not capable of saving ourselves. "There was a man, and he was sent from God, and his name was John."

Well, you see right in the midst of one of the greatest passages in the Bible we are suddenly confronted with the mundane, if you will excuse me, John. A name so common that there is one in almost every family. Again, a name without any identifying surname. A character who hadn't been heard of since he was born. Obviously, this is the weak point in God's plan. This is the great risk. The whole operation can break down right here. Every superintendent and certainly every bishop has had a conversation with the pastor parish committee who have told the bishop or the superintendent in great glowing terms the kind of pastor that their church needs. They need someone who thinks about the future of their church, the importance of the pulpit; a voice that can speak to the whole world from this pulpit. And then they turn to the bishop and say "Now who can you send us that can do this?" And the bishop scratches his head a moment and says "Well, uh, there's John." And the committee looks kind of aghast, and says "Oh."

The implication here really is that this name itself identifies a human being. John is human; he's vulnerable. As events soon proved, John the Baptist was terribly vulnerable. He was utterly defenseless. He's dependent. He's a front-runner, in football terminology he's the blocking half-back. He's preparing the way for the feet of God. He probably won't get in the newspapers at all. Nobody will know he's there, because he's "John." John who? John what? What did John ever do?

THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRISTIANITY: "GOD'S POWERLESSNESS"

Every man who declares himself for the ministry is vulnerable to be dependent. He can hardly complain that no one warned him about this. Paul warned the Corinthians that anyone who followed Jesus must expect the role of a public spectacle, like the animal being led to the arena to be killed for the entertainment of the multitude. Unfortunately some congregations take this very literally. But if

SEPTEMBER 20, 1973

the minister is in any sense God's representative then in his vulnerability and in his dependence he represents not God's power but God's powerlessness.

God also announced to Mary "You will call his name Jesus. He will be identified with the weakness and the fallibility and the powerlessness of men. He will always be at the mercy of men." Christianity is absolutely unique because it testifies to a God who puts himself at the mercy of man. Other faiths speak proudly of man's need of God. Christianity speaks in a strange and hard-to-understand way about a God who needs man. Jesus came into the world at the mercy of man. He was driven out of the country. He was pursued. Men sought ways to destroy him. Yet the vulnerability of Jesus is the vulnerability of God the Father who reverses all human experience and gives strength by his very weakness and enables by his very impotence.

ON CONGREGATIONS AND PASTORS

Like God at the mercy of men, the minister is at the mercy of people. He is dependent upon them for the support of his ministry, for their forbearance to sustain his ministry and for their inspiration to increase the productivity of his ministry. A congregation practically always gets the min-

ister it deserves. Mainly because it's the congregation that brings out the strength or the weakness of their pastor. Some seem to bring out the very best in a man, to expect good, to bring out all the finest qualities. And I dare say there isn't a one of us tonight who wouldn't say that everything we are in the ministry we owe to a family of God that believed in us and sustained and lifted us up and expected more out of us than we could ever give, and they really made us.

On the other hand there are those congregations that appear to do everything they can to bring out the weaknesses and the fallibilities and the vulnerability of men.

The least-gifted pastor has often become a powerful influence for the kingdom because his people have loved him and sustained him and called out qualities that only God knew were within him. So powerful is this mutuality in the church that when a preacher appears to have failed, the congregation should not ask "Where did he go wrong?", but should rather ask "Where did we let him down?"

Well, there was a man, sent from God, and his name was . . .

The peace of God, and the power of the powerlessness of God, go with you. Amen.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WEEK

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 6

Little Rock Conference

Bishop Eugene M. Frank
Director, Council on Ministries.....Rev. Alf A. Eason
Associate Director, Council on Ministries.....Rev. R. O. Beck
Associate Director, Council on Ministries.....Rev. John H. Thompson

Board of Education (Executive Committee)

Chairman.....Rev. Charles G. Ashcraft, 1525 Reedwood, Malvern, Ark. 72104
Vice Chairman.....Rev. Edward W. Harris, 301 Waldron Bldg., Little Rock, Ark. 72201
Co-Vice Chairman.....W. H. Fowler, 2515 Ringo, Little Rock, Ark. 72206
Secretary.....Rev. Virgil C. Bell, P. O. Box 149, Hamburg, Ark. 71646

Conference Age Level Coordinators

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. John L. Tucker, 715 Center, Little Rock, Ark. 72201
Youth and Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. R. O. Beck, 715 Center, Little Rock, Ark. 72201
Adult Ministries.....Rev. William A. Stewart, P. O. Box 417, Carlisle, Ark. 72024
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. William D. Elliott, 309 S. Main, Monticello, Ark. 71655

District

Arkadelphia

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. John Prothro, P. O. Box 61, Sparkman, Ark. 71762
Youth Ministries.....Mrs. L. H. Smith, 1031 Wallace, Malvern, Ark. 72104
Adult Ministries.....Rev. George F. Ivey, 1100 Central, Hot Springs, Ark. 71901
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Doyne E. Graham, 1508 Porter, Malvern, Ark. 72104

Camden

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. John B. Ross, P. O. Box 205, Stephens, Ark. 71764
Youth Ministries.....Mrs. Henry Crook, 931 Maplewood, El Dorado, Ark. 71730
Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. Allen B. Bonsall, Box 1290, Southern State College, Magnolia, Ark. 71753
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Robert Johnson, 1002 Parson, Stamps, Ark. 71860
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. James H. Shaddox, 1204 S. Washington, El Dorado, Ark. 71730

Hope

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. W. Darrell Bone, 7 Arnold Dr., Texarkana, Ark. 75501
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Charles T. Settle, 513½ East 5th, Texarkana, Ark. 75501
Young Adult Ministries.....Jerry Seitz, DeQueen, Ark. 71832
Adult Ministries.....Rev. R. T. Jarrell, P. O. Box 95, Blevins, Ark. 71825
Family Life Ministries.....Mrs. J. Percy Purifoy, 2400 E. 24th, Texarkana, Ark. 75501

Little Rock

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. Shelia M. Hurt, 2 Whispering Pines, Alexander, Ark. 72002
Youth Ministries.....Mrs. Harold Allen, N. Mississippi at Evergreen, Little Rock, Ark. 72207
Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. Daniel C. George, 1101 Mason, Benton, Ark. 72015
Adult Ministries.....Rev. William A. Stewart, P. O. Box 417, Carlisle, Ark. 72024
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Carr Dee Racop, Jr., 606 Poinsetta, Little Rock, Ark. 72205

Monticello

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. N. J. Garrett, 1009 Main St., Crossett, Ark. 71635
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Virgil C. Bell, P. O. Box 149, Hamburg, Ark. 71646
Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. Calvin D. Mitchell, P. O. Box 178, Star City, Ark. 71667
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Joe E. Arnold, 210 E. Shields, Warren, Ark. 71671
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. William D. Elliott, 309 S. Main, Monticello, Ark. 71655

Pine Bluff

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. Larry Williams, 32 School, Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Harold Hansford, 2507 N. Sheraton, Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601
Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. Larry Williams, 32 School, Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601
Adult Ministries.....Mrs. Hazel Dabney, 2619 Oak, Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Larry Pearce, 1500 Olive, Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- ★ is not an option
- ★ is not confined to the church school
- ★ is not another "program"
- ★ is not dead nor even dying

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- ★ is involvement in the faith
- ★ is action for the faith
- ★ is the faith being communicated
- ★ is witnessing to the faith
- ★ is the responsibility of the people of the faith

North Arkansas Conference

Bishop Eugene M. Frank
Director, Council on Ministries.....Dr. Myers B. Curtis
Associate Director, Council on Ministries.....Rev. Arvill C. Brannon
Associate Director, Council on Ministries.....Rev. John H. Thompson

Board of Education (Executive Committee)

Rev. William M. Wilder, P. O. Box 849, Wynne, Ark. 72396 - Chairman
Rev. John B. Hays, Lakewood United Methodist Church, Fairway Avenue and Topf Road,
North Little Rock, Ark. 72116
Rev. Wayne C. Jarvis, 115 West Third, Rector, Ark. 72461

Conference Age Level Coordinators

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. Jim Beal, Ridgemont Road, Helena, Ark. 72342
Youth Ministries.....Mrs. Carol Henry, Fairway Avenue at Topf Road, North Little Rock, Ark. 72116
Young Adult Ministries.....Rev. Joe Kennedy, Route 4, Paragould, Ark. 72450
Adult Ministries.....Charles Mabry, Route 4, Batesville, Ark. 72501
Family Life Ministries.....Henry Heidelberger, Route 1, Box 67, Lexa, Ark. 72355

District

Batesville

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. George Cleary, Box 370, Cotter, Ark. 72625
Youth Ministries.....John Copher, 304 North Main, Searcy, Ark. 72143
Adult Ministries.....Charles Mabry, Route 4, Batesville, Ark. 72501
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Jessie Bruner, Box 74, Mt. View, Ark. 72560

Conway

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. William E. Muller, Jr., 3601 Fox Hill Road, North Little Rock, Ark. 72116
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Herschel H. McClurkin, 300 Yuma Avenue, Russellville, Ark. 72801
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Clyde Parsons, 201 S. Chestnut at Church, Morrilton, Ark. 72110
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. John B. Hays, 2017 Topf Road, North Little Rock, Ark. 72116

Fayetteville

Children's Ministries.....Rev. Max Whitfield, 1006 South Oak, Harrison, Ark. 72601
Youth Ministries.....Rev. David Moose, Box 549, Gentry, Ark. 72734
Adult Ministries.....Rev. W. Maurice Lanier, 205 West Sixth, Fayetteville, Ark. 72701
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. William P. Connell, Third and Elm, Rogers, Ark. 72756

Forrest City

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. Albert H. Cockrill, 511 Lemon, Wynne, Ark. 72396
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Lowell Eaton, Box 452, Augusta, Ark. 72006
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Ben G. Hines, Box 856, West Memphis, Ark. 72301
Family Life Ministries.....Mrs. Earl Hughes, 6205 E. Broadway, Forrest City, Ark. 72355

Fort Smith

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. Robert Harmon, 2625 Fresno Place, Fort Smith, Ark. 72901
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Andrew M. Hall, Jr., 2512 North Albert Pike, Fort Smith, Ark. 72901
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Clarence Wilcox, 620 North Main, Booneville, Ark. 72927
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Waymon Hollis, 4101 South Dallas, Fort Smith, Ark. 72901

Jonesboro

Children's Ministries.....Mrs. James Barton, P. O. Box 247, Hickory Ridge, Ark. 72347
Youth Ministries.....Rev. Jerry Canada, 503 Parkview, Jonesboro, Ark. 72401
Adult Ministries.....Rev. Thomas Weir, P. O. Box 175, Harrisburg, Ark. 72432
Family Life Ministries.....Rev. Worth W. Gibson, 923 Park, Jonesboro, Ark. 72401

Paragould

Children's Ministries.....Rev. William C. Haltom, Box 66, Walnut Ridge, Ark. 72476
Youth Ministries.....Rev. David Driver, Swifton, Ark. 72471
Adult Ministries.....Rev. David P. Conyers, P. O. Box 489, Newport, Ark. 72112
Family Life Ministries.....Mrs. Raymond L. Franks, 330 West Main, Paragould, Ark. 72450

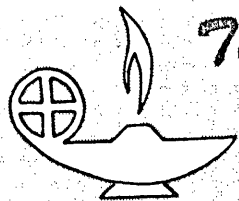
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY

- ★ is recognizing
- ★ is planning
- ★ is preparing
- ★ is promoting
- ★ is participating
- ★ is giving
- ★ is declaring
- ★ is proclaiming
- ★ is witnessing

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY

THEME: "THE CHURCH: EQUIPPING AND CELEBRATING"

SEPTEMBER 30, 1973



The Sunday School Lesson

by the Editor

LESSON FOR SEPTEMBER 30:

"Good News for Sinners"

ORIENTATION: We are in the first quarter of the 1973-74 Church School year. The theme for this quarter (Sept., Oct., Nov.) is **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL**. We are beginning Unit #2 of this quarter. The unit subject is **THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION**. Our lesson for Sept. 30 is the first in this unit of five lessons and is entitled "Good News for Sinners."

THE SCRIPTURE: Romans 1:1 through 2:16.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON: To give a general introduction to the Letter to the Romans, with a specific look at the first eight chapters; to examine some of the basic words and concepts Paul uses to convey the good news of the gospel to sinners; to see that the good news is a reconciling message.

MEMORY SELECTION: I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, (Romans 1:16).

BEGINNING A NEW UNIT

During the last four weeks we have given our attention to the "MINISTRY of Reconciliation." We turn now to consider "The MESSAGE of Reconciliation." Our ministry and our message are intricately woven together, each dependent upon the other. Reconciliation — a vital aspect of the total ministry of the church — remains the center of attention in this study. Today we open our minds and hearts to see how that message is truly "good news for sinners."

Our unit of five lessons is essentially a study of the first eight chapters of Romans, and sets forth the basic content of Paul's understanding of the gospel.

Since we are to be giving so much attention to Paul's letter to the Romans for the next five weeks, we will spend a generous portion of our time today in an introductory look at that great letter.

THE GREATEST AND MOST UNIQUE LETTER

It would be difficult to overstate the influence that Romans has had on the Christian world. John Knox says that the letter is "unquestionably the most important theological book ever written (Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 9, pg. 355). F. W. Beare states that "the true value of Romans to Christian theology cannot be overestimated, and it remains indispensable to the understanding of most of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith . . ." (The Interpreter's Bible Dictionary, Vol. 4, pg. 112).

Romans is one of thirteen letters in the New Testament ascribed to Paul. While most of his letters abound in personal references to individuals in the various churches to which he was writing, Romans is void of such personal touches. Paul had never been to Rome, and his letter to the community there is unique in that its content is strictly "theological." In Romans Paul is "intent upon distilling the very essence . . . of his faith and belief" (William Barclay, DAILY BIBLE STUDY, vol. on Romans, pg. xxi).

The city of Rome represented to Paul a challenge he could not resist. "I must also see Rome," was his declaration reported in Acts 19:21. For years he had been haunted by thoughts of this capital city of the greatest empire the world had ever seen. He must, some day, carry the gospel to Rome!

Barclay has a beautiful statement concerning Paul's missionary vision:

"It has been said of Paul that he was 'always

haunted by the regions beyond.' He never saw a ship at anchor but he wished to board her, and to carry the message of the good news to the men across the sea. He never saw a range of mountains, blue in the distance, but he wished to cross them, and to bring the story of the cross to the men who had never heard it" (pg. xxiii-xxiv).

A part of Paul's great vision was that Rome might someday serve as a base city from which to carry the Gospel to Spain. He writes to the Romans (15:24) "I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be sped on my journey by you . . ."

It is fitting for Paul, as he writes to the Christians in Rome, to pour out for them the very heart and soul of his belief.

THE HARMFULNESS OF WRONG IDEAS

Among Paul's purposes in writing to the Romans was to give them the fullest possible statement of the truth of the gospel in order to guard them against the harmfulness of wrong teachings. Again Barclay is helpful here:

"Paul had seen too often what harm and trouble can be caused by wrong ideas, twisted notions, misguided conceptions of Christian faith and belief. He therefore wished to send . . . a letter which would so build up the structure of their faith that, if infections should ever come to them, they might have in the true work of Christian doctrine a powerful and effective defense" (xxii).

THE OUTLINE OF ROMANS

While we are concerned in this unit with just the first eight chapters of Romans, our next unit takes us through chapter 14 of this sixteen chapter letter. Therefore it will be helpful to see the book as a whole in the following brief outline:

- I. Chapters 1-8 deal with the problem of righteousness.
- II. Chapters 9-11 are concerned with matters relating to the Jews, the chosen people.
- III. Chapters 12-15 deal with practical questions of life and living.
- IV. Chapter 16 is a letter of introduction for Phoebe, and contains a list of final personal greetings.

GOOD NEWS FOR SINNERS

The heart of Paul's message concerns what God has done for man. In the passage under consideration in today's lesson, there are at least five great central ideas in his thought: righteousness, salvation, faith, justification and wrath. We can look at these only briefly.

RIGHTEOUSNESS. The general topic of concern in the first eight chapters of Romans is "the problem of righteousness." When Paul uses the word "righteousness," he means a right relationship with God. The man who is righteous "is the man who is in a right relationship with God, and whose life shows it" (Barclay). The Jews, says Paul, had sought to achieve righteousness by observing each and every law of the first five books of the Old Testament. Paul had tried that way himself and found that it ended in frustration and defeat.

Paul found, rather, that the way to righteousness was the way of complete trust and "utter yieldedness;" to take God at his word and to throw oneself on the mercy and love of God — the way of faith. The whole thing, says Paul, is a matter of grace and "all we can do is to accept in wondering love and gratitude and trust what God has done for us" (Barclay).

SALVATION. "For I am not ashamed of the

gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith . . ." (Rom. 1:16). If you have access to THE DAILY STUDY BIBLE by Barclay (vol. on Romans), pages 10-12 give an excellent statement on seven elements of Christian salvation. These are important to "Paul's gospel," and vital to our understanding of how the gospel is good news to sinners.

Christian salvation is salvation from physical illness; it is aimed at rescuing man in body and soul — it is not just other-worldly. It is salvation "from danger." It makes a man safe — not that it shields him from peril and danger, but that it affords a "security of soul" which the world cannot give nor take away.

Christian salvation is deliverance from "life's infection;" it is rescue from lostness. It is release from sin; it is delivery from the wrath of God (see below); and it is a salvation which is "eschatological." That is to say that it is a "salvation which finds its full consummation beyond time. It will find its full meaning and fulfillment in the final triumph of Jesus Christ (Barclay, pg. 12).

FAITH. "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'" (Rom. 1:17). "Faith" is a rich and powerful word in Paul's usage. He utilizes it to express loyalty and fidelity, belief, "religion" (as in "the faith"), indestructible hope, and total acceptance and absolute trust. Faith according to Paul means "betting your life that there is a God." Faith begins with receptivity, goes on to mental assent and ends in total surrender.

JUSTIFICATION. "Justification" does not mean that God finds reason to prove that a sinner was right in a wrong deed. It means that "God treats the sinner as if he had not been a sinner at all. Instead of treating the sinner as a criminal to be obliterated God treats him as a child to be loved" (Barclay, pg. 13).

WRATH. "For the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven . . ." (Rom. 1:18). Here is a difficult phrase. It has been suggested that "because God is God, because God is characteristically holy, he cannot tolerate sin, and the wrath of God is God's 'annihilating reaction' against sin." A strange thing is that while Paul speaks frequently of the wrath of God, he never speaks of God as being angry. He speaks of "the wrath" as though this were an impersonal force at work in the world. Paul seems to be saying that the force of the "moral order" in the world is the way the "wrath of God" is operative.

WHEN MAN FORGETS GOD

From 1:26-32 Paul depicts the degeneration which follows when man leaves God out of his reckoning. It was an age of unparalleled immorality and degeneracy.

The good news behind it all, for all sinners, is that into man's dilemma comes the love of God, through which by an act of free grace, man is lifted from the consequences of sin and saved from "the wrath." There is good news for sinners in what God has done for man.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In Romans Paul is writing to some who have never heard the Christian message. What are the essential points of his message? Based on these, how would you tell another person what the "good news for sinners" is?
2. What is the harm that comes from wrong ideas? What is the responsibility of the church in responding to wrong ideas?

NEXT WEEK: "LAW AND GOSPEL"—Romans 2:17-3:31.

'Missionaries to Us'

NEW YORK (UMC) — One missionary is a community center director, two are on local church staffs, one is a member of an annual conference staff, yet another serves in varied mission assignments.

Unusual for missionaries to be doing such work? No. Except that in these cases the missionaries are not Americans serving in other countries, in the 150-year tradition of missionary sending and receiving. They are "missionaries to us," overseas churchpersons working with United Methodists and others in the U.S. in a kind of reversal of roles as to who is the "foreign missionary" and who is the "receiving church."

There are undoubtedly others, but these five at least are helping to give in-person reality to the often-used phrase of mission strategists in recent years — "mission to six continents." Under that concept, "foreign missionaries" are sent not just from the West to the Third World but from Asia, Africa and Latin America to the U.S. and Europe. The concept is not entirely new, but some directions and dimensions are.

Indications are that the idea is being realized—though perhaps only in the beginning stage—through the sending and/or serving of overseas churchpersons such as these missionaries. The five are from Japan, Indonesia, Mexico and India. In the U.S., United Methodism is the receiving church, or among receiving churches and church agencies. One of the five told an American church audience recently about the novel fact of a Third World missionary "in your midst. Who could have thought or conceived such an idea a few years ago?"

So far as is known, the Methodist church to sponsor most recently a missionary in the U.S. is the autonomous Methodist Church of Mexico. The Rev. Horacio M. Rios has been designated a missionary of the Mexico church to work with United Methodists. He is scheduled to be commissioned next December as part of the climax of the centennial observance of Methodism in Mexico.

Plans call for Mexico's Alejandro Ruiz and Los Angeles Area Bishop Charles F. Golden to officiate in a commissioning service at the historic Gante Methodist Church in Mexico City. Mr. Rios is executive director of Wesley Community Center (United Methodist) in Phoenix, Ariz.

Though he is the first missionary of the Mexican church to the U.S., he is not the first Methodist overseas missionary from Mexico. A husband-and-wife, minister-doctor team is serving in Ecuador un-

der the auspices of the Methodist Churches of Latin America.

Perhaps the most developed program is that of the United Church of Christ of Japan (Kyodan), which in two years has sent at least two ministers to serve as missionaries related to the United Methodist Church. Kyodan missionaries also serve in relation to other U. S. churches. The program involves the Kyodan, United Methodism's Advisory Committee on Asian-American Ministries, the World Division of the Board of Global Ministries, and the churches and annual conferences where the Japanese missionaries serve. The workers are sent by the mission agency of the Kyodan, just as U.S. missionaries are sent overseas by the World Division.

The first missionary to come under the arrangement was the Rev. Akio Tsukamoto, who in 1971 joined the staff of Simpson United Methodist Church, Arvada, Colo. He and a second missionary, the Rev. Jun Ehara, serving at the West Los Angeles (Calif.) United Methodist Church, work, among other things, with recent immigrants from Japan and other Japanese-speaking persons.

The Kyodan has had an active overseas missionary outreach in recent years, with workers serving in Bolivia, Nepal, Thailand, the U. S. and other countries.

A different style and relationship is seen in the ministry in the U. S. of the Rev. Satish Gyan of India and the Rev. Ginting Suka of Sumatra, Indonesia.

United Methodists in Indiana, especially the South Indiana Conference, consider Mr. Gyan "a missionary to us," said Newman Cryer, director of communications for the Indiana Area. Mr. Gyan also sees himself in the role of a missionary from India and other parts of the Third World.

The young minister functions as a member of the South Indiana Conference Council on Ministries staff, his primary assignment being to interpret Third World concerns and perspectives. This he does by speaking in local churches, at district meetings and elsewhere, in dialogue with groups, and in other ways. He is on a year's assignment. A former pastor and youth center director in India, Mr. Gyan came to his ministry role from study at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Mr. Gyan is believed to be perhaps the first person to serve on a United Methodist conference staff in a Third World missionary capacity. At the recent session of the Conference, he gave some reasons for accepting the invitation to serve:

"I have been receiving missionaries, and here was an offer to reciprocate. I have been both critical and appreciative of missionary work in India. Here was an opportunity to place myself in the same position, and experience what it means to be a missionary, to experience his achievements and failures. There was the challenge to raise Third World issues and interpret the meaning of being a church in developing countries."

Yet another variation on the "reverse missionary" role is to be found in Mr. Suka, a former moderator of the Karo Batak Church in Sumatra, Indonesia, a church with which the Methodist Church of Indonesia and the World Division have relationships.

Mr. Suka is on an approximately two-year assignment as a missionary sent to America by the Indonesian Council of Churches. The receiving agencies in the U. S. are the Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of Churches and the Joint Strategy and Action Committee (JSAC). His varied work has taken him to the Missionary Orientation Center at Stony Point, N. Y., to help train new American missionaries including United Methodists, to Ventnor, N. J., on a similar assignment and to a ministry with churches in the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The assignment of a church leader rather than someone with less experience indicates the importance the Indonesian Council of Churches attaches to the project, a National Council of Churches spokesman said.

The idea of Third World missionaries to America and its reality in the presence of such workers are related to an emerging concept in United Methodism's World Division — "persons in mission." One of several types of "persons in mission" is missionaries from churches outside the U. S. sent to other countries including America. The Division said: "We (in the U.S.) have come to appreciate that those churches we have historically known as 'mission fields' in reality have a great deal to teach us concerning the Christian faith."

Overseas personnel in mission in the U. S. is not an entirely new phenomenon, though some of the kinds of service by such workers are new. In previous years, groups of overseas Christians have come on short-term evangelistic and preaching missions sponsored by national boards, and at one time the former Board of Missions had overseas Christians as staff members in various positions.

From Our Readers

Contributions for this column should be written briefly and bear the signature and address of the writer. What appears here does not necessarily represent the point of view of this publication and the editor reserves the right to withhold, edit for space, or print contributions.

GOOD NEWS FROM A CONTENTED SLEEPER

Sir:

I can't help from commenting after reading the last paragraph on page 3 of your Aug. 23 issue, where the pastor . . . said "I always read your column late at night so I can go to sleep with nothing on my mind."

Congratulations; such comfortable thoughts, such relaxations in godly thoughts, such cleansing of mind and body and spirit, that after reading your column there's nothing to keep us from going to sleep.

Keep up the good work.

Yours,
John R. Craig
Lake Charles, La.

FIFTEEN CENTS FOR A WORTHY CAUSE?

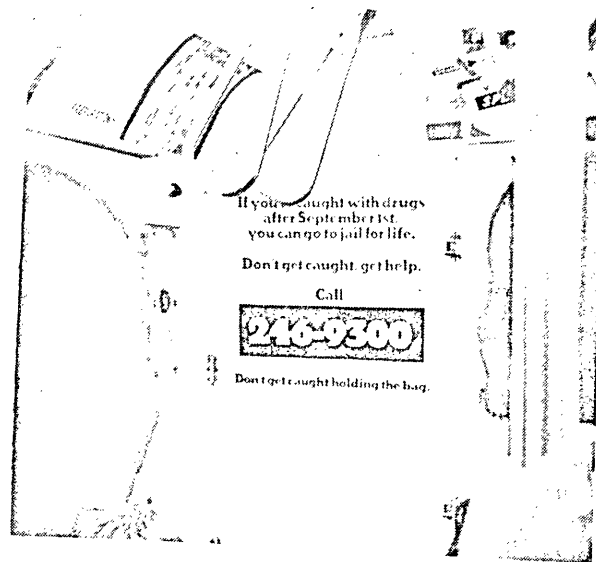
To the Editor:

Did you know that we're going to have to recall more than 10 percent of our missionary personnel if something doesn't happen? That's right! Because of devaluation and inflation, we'll only be able to field 824 missionaries in 1974 with the funds in sight now.

I think that's a terrible prospect for a church as strong as The United Methodist Church with a task of compelling as is ours in the world today, and I believe something can be done about it.

If every Methodist contributed 15 cents in NEW money for the General Advance program we could put all 922 missionaries back in the field. Fifteen cents; that'll buy one soft drink apiece, or all together from each and every Methodist it will put 98 missionaries back to work.

. . . . I believe that if Methodist



people understand a problem, they'll respond to it. So . . . our paper can help . . . get this message across; . . . thousands of people who are blessed by the work of our Methodist missionaries (will appreciate it).

Gratefully,
The Rev. Thomas A. Abney
Little Rock Conference Missionary Secretary

NEW YORK — "Must" reading in New York's subways, as of Sept. 1, warned residents of the state's tough new drug law, presented by Gov. Rockefeller and endorsed by the legislature. The nation's toughest narcotics law provides for mandatory life sentences for those who sell hard drugs and rewards for informers who notify authorities of the work of "pushers." (RNS Photo)

News in Brief

The urgency of getting religious values into government consideration of population problems was stressed by an ecumenical consultation on population this summer coordinated by Jessma Blockwick, a staff executive of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society.

Professors of evangelism to hold seminar

Some thirty seminary professors who teach evangelism are convening Sept. 28 and 29 at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology.

The purpose of the two-day seminar is for the sharing of insights and methods for evangelism instruction and to establish a new academic society for the discipline. The convener of the group is Dr. George Hunter, Assistant Professor in the McCreless Chair of Communication and Evangelism at Perkins, and former staff member of United Methodism's General Board of Evangelism.

The idea for the meeting and pending society was stimulated in September of 1972 by a letter to Hunter from Princeton Theological Seminary's Dr. George Sweazey, in which Sweazey exclaimed "I wish there was an association of teachers of evangelism, where we could get together and talk shop. Each of us feels very much on his own."

Dr. Sweazey, formerly head of evangelism for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and author of the widely known used book "Effective Evangelism," is to be the keynote speaker. The other featured speaker is National Council of Churches staffman Dean M. Kelley, author of the "rave book" in evangelism for 1972, "Why Conservative Churches Are Growing." Kelley's address for the afternoon of Sept. 28 is titled "The Religion 'Business' and What Makes It 'Take.'"

Hunter believes that the new association can be a significant boon to church evangelism movements and ministries in this generation. He exclaims, "If we are on the crest of a possible Third Great Awakening — as Albert Outler and other discerners of the signs of the times believe us to be — then now is the time to marshal scholarship, attention, and sophisticated instruction toward this end."

Other speakers who will be featured in the event, in addition to Sweazey and Kelly, are: Garth Rosell, Bethel Theological Seminary; Roy J. Fish, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Donald G. Dawe, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond; Ralph W. Quere, Wartburg Theological Seminary; Charles Shaver, Nazarene Theo-

Merger of Ohio United Methodist seminaries to become effective by mid-1975

DAYTON, Ohio (UMC) — Significant steps toward uniting the two United Methodist seminaries in Ohio were taken here Sept. 8 by the boards of trustees of the two institutions. Involved are United Theological Seminary in Dayton and Methodist Theological School in Ohio near Delaware.

Trustees of the two seminaries, meeting on the Dayton campus, voted to set "no later than" September, 1974 the deadline for the boards to vote on a Plan of Union, a name, corporate and administrative structure, unified budget and joint academic programs. They set the effective date of the new corporation as July 1, 1975.

The boards also established two top interim administrative offices and named the acting officers. They are: Acting chancellor, Dr. John W. Dickhaut, president of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio since its inception in 1958; Acting provost, Dr. John R. Knecht, president of United Theological Seminary since 1965. The officers are to serve during the transition period and at the same time oversee the operations of their respective institutions.

The acting chancellor, a new position, is to serve as the chief executive officer of the theological school charged with policy and other matters.

The acting provost is to be the principal academic officer charged with general supervision of the academic program, and responsible to the chancellor.

The boards' actions grew out of recommendations approved earlier by the Joint Administrative Board of the two schools. The resolutions were worked out by the JAB's Planning and Development Committee.

The trustees also approved a new name for the united school — "United Theological School," with corporate headquarters in Delaware, Ohio. Union of the two schools has been long in the planning stages. As early as 1966 the faculties and administrative staff of the two institutions discussed the possibility of merger.

In 1972 at Atlanta, Ga., the General Conference, highest law-making body of the United Methodist Church, directed the two schools in Ohio to unite.

United Theological Seminary on Dayton's north side celebrated its centennial this past year. It was previously known as Bonebrake. Methodist Theological School was founded in the late 1950 to fill an urgent need for a seminary in this area, the greatest concentration of Methodists in the nation.

Dr. Dickhaut was instrumental in

raising the original \$4 million for MTS and became its first president. He came to the office after 18 years in the Methodist ministry following preparation at Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill. He twice served as a district superintendent—in Dayton and Columbus — besides serving as pastor of six churches in the 1940s and 1950s.

Dr. Knecht, a minister in the Evangelical United Brethren denomination, prepared for the ministry at United, graduating in 1945. He also earned a master's degree at Yale. He taught in Canton, China, served pastorates in Indiana from 1949 to 1955, and served as executive secretary of the E.U.B. Board of Evangelism until becoming president of the seminary in Dayton.

Trustees explained that facilities of both campuses, together with other educational contexts which both schools use will be utilized "for the foreseeable future" inasmuch as both seminaries are filled to capacity, approximately 500 students at both schools.

Further meetings of the acting chancellor and provost with the joint boards of trustees will be designed to bring the merger to fruition within the next 21 months.

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Seminaries face 'crisis' despite fund increases

"There is a near crisis in the financial support of our theological schools" Bishop Don W. Holter of Nebraska Area has told each of the active United Methodist bishops.

Bishop Holter, chairman of the Division of the Ordained Ministry of the general Board of Higher Education and Ministry pointed out to the bishops that decreases from World Service contributions to the theological schools

are being made at a more rapid rate than the increase in support provided through the Ministerial Education Fund.

"Therefore," he pointed out, "the Ministerial Education Fund must produce in 1973 over 80 per cent of the apportionment for 1973 or our seminaries will get less money than they did in 1972 when the Ministerial Education Fund produced about 71 per cent" of its apportionment.

In addition to supporting seminaries directly, 25 per cent of all contributions to the Ministerial Education Fund are retained within the annual conference for use in providing aca-

demic scholarships to seminarians, assisting in continuing education funds, retreats and other means of professional enrichment.

Bishop Holter knows the plight of theological seminaries first hand. Until his election to the episcopacy in 1972, he was president of St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, one of United Methodism's 14 seminaries in the United States.

Contributions to the Ministerial Education Fund are received through giving at the local church level, either in local church budgets, special gifts, or both.

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Jurisdiction considering regional lab and training seminars

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. (UMN) — Four different laboratory and seminar training enterprises for United Methodists have been proposed here for the summer of 1974 by a special South Central Jurisdiction task force.

Dr. S. Duane Bruce, Oklahoma City jurisdiction executive, said the proposed training enterprises would be held at four different locations in the eight-state region. Previously all laboratory training was done at the Mt. Sequoyah Assembly in Fayetteville, Ark.

"One of the enterprises, planned for advanced studies, would be held at Mt. Sequoyah Assembly," said Dr. Bruce. "A second will be held at Sacramento, N.M.; a third conducted in the Kan-

sas-Nebraska area, and the fourth event in a local church setting in Houston."

Dr. William T. Stephenson, Dallas chairman of the task force, described the move as an effort "to get such training closer to the annual conference of the jurisdiction."

This plan will be recommended to the Oct. 11-12 meeting of the South Central Jurisdiction Council on Ministries at Fayetteville, Ark., according to Dr. Stephenson.

Task force members in addition to Stephenson and Bruce were: Kenneth W. Short, Wichita, Kansas; Mrs. Dan Rodriguez, San Antonio; C. Jarrell Tyson, Amarillo; Bruce Krause, Houston; B. C. Goodwin, Carlsbad; and Mrs. Donald B. Gardner, Oklahoma City.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1973

Worldwide Prayer Vigil, Dec. 31. Evangelism Congress, Jan. 8

COLUMBUS, Ohio (RNS) — A Worldwide Vigil of Prayer, sponsored by the World Methodist Council, will begin in the Tonga Islands on Dec. 31 then around the world. Tonga was chosen because it is near the International Date Line. The date for the vigil was announced here following a meeting of the Council's Evangelism Committee.

As a part of a world evangelism thrust, the committee also said that simultaneous Bible study is being prepared for Lent 1974. While a Worldwide Consultation on Evangelism originally set for this Fall has been post-

poned, regional consultations will be held next year.

A Congress on Evangelism will be held in Houston, Jan. 8-10, 1974.

Designed for use in the prayer vigil, a cassette containing greetings and statements from Methodist leaders around the world will be produced. The Bible study for Lent has been written by Dr. William Barclay of Edinburgh University, Scotland. It is called Jesus Christ for Today.

United Methodist Bishop F. Gerald Ensley of Columbus is chairman of the evangelism unit of the World Methodist Council.

NEWS and NOTES

THE REV. AND MRS. MANUEL E. Scott, of Malvern, will observe their 50th wedding anniversary Sunday, Oct. 7, with an open house at First United Methodist Church, Malvern, from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. Although Rev. Scott is retired, he has the Carthage Circuit and preaches several times each Sunday. The Scotts have five children, Mrs. Martha Price of Malvern, Mrs. Charlotte Barnes of Warren, Mrs. Mary Sue Taylor of Arkadelphia, Mrs. Beth Turner of Morrilton, and the Rev. J. Robert Scott of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Little Rock. All friends and members of former congregations are invited to attend this celebration.

FIRST UNITED Methodist Church, Cotton Plant, presented perfect attendance pins to Angela Caperton Kathryn Cruce, and Tracy McMullan for two years; Pattie Fraser for three years; Lee Ann Cruce for five years; and Shelby Crafford for eight years. The presentations were made by Charles Davis, Sunday school superintendent. The Rev. Wilbert Fagean is the pastor.

GEORGE EDMOND ROOK, a junior ministerial student at Hendrix College, spoke at the Lewisville and Buckner Churches on Aug. 26 and Sept. 2 in the absence of the minister, the Rev. Joe W. Hunter.

MISS OLIVE SMITH, of Little Rock, conducted a training school for the elementary teachers of First United Methodist Church in Monticello, Aug. 20-22. The Rev. William D. Elliott is the Monticello pastor.

OAKLEY CHAPEL United Methodist Church will hold its 101st anniversary celebration on Sunday, Sept. 30, with a homecoming. The morning service will be followed by a basket dinner. All former pastors, members, and friends are invited to come and share in the celebration. The Rev. Richard G. Benefield will be the host pastor.

THE NASHVILLE United Methodist Church is holding a Fall Preaching Mission this week, Sept. 16-19, with Dr. George Wayne Martin, superintendent of the Arkadelphia District, as guest preacher. Services are held at 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. daily. The Rev. David B. Wilson is host pastor.

WANTED: Director of children's, youth and adult choirs, with responsibility for youth program. Good salary. Contact Dr. Charles W. Richards, First United Methodist Church, 304 N. Main St., Searcy, Ark. 72143: Telephone 268-5897.

HOLLY GROVE REVIVAL HAS ECUMENICAL OVERTONES

The Holly Grove Church of the Forrest City District recently conducted a ten-night meeting which had several ecumenical overtones. It began with a special musical program by the Balmoral Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn. The following three nights were highlighted by the preaching of Jimmy Stroud of the Memphis Union Mission.

Guest preachers the last six nights were the Rev. Murphy Spurlock of Marvel, the Rev. Clayton Harrison of the Mississippi Conference, and the Rev. Cleve Yarbrough of Earle.

At the closing session a special offering was taken to promote the work of evangelism in the area.

The Rev. Lorne R. Piercey is the pastor of the Holly Grove Church.

†
AT BLYTHEVILLE, revival services are planned in First United Methodist Church the week of Sept. 30-Oct. 4. Guest evangelist will be the Rev. Sam H. Coker, senior minister at Grace United Methodist Church in Atlanta. Song leader will be the Rev. Robert Bowling, pastor of the Cumming University Methodist Church, Cumming, Ga. Host pastor will be the Rev. J. William Watson.

CONWAY DISTRICT ELECTS OFFICERS

Conway District Parsonettes have appointed the following officers for the coming year: Mrs. Katherine Eggensperger, president; Mrs. Velma Cordell, vice president; Mrs. Othella Peters, secretary-treasurer; and Mrs. Gracie Pollard, scrapbook chairperson.

The executive committee met with Mrs. Eggensperger recently and made plans for meeting dates and programs for the coming year. The first meeting for this year will be with Mrs. Eggensperger at Conway on Sept. 20 at 10:00 a.m.

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THE REV. MERLE A. JOHNSON, pastor of the Siloam Springs United Methodist Church, is preaching in Mountain Home this week. The Rev. Norman Carter is host pastor. Special music is by the Junior and Adult Choirs, the Ozark Quartet, and Le Jubile Doux.

WEST HELENA held the church-wide picnic Sept. 9 on the lawn of the Ralph Darnell home, with 125 attending. Wynelle Williams presented the devotional and Jim Richardson led fellowship singing. The Rev. Brady Cook is pastor.

DEWITT WOMEN MEET USING SCHOOL THEME

"School Days" was the theme of the September luncheon for Methodist women, held Wednesday noon, Sept. 5, in First United Methodist Church, DeWitt. Circle 5 members served as hostesses for this "kick-off" luncheon of the fall season. Members effectively carried out the theme with a "little red school house" centerpiece, accented by "apples for the teacher," pencils and rulers. The old favorite, "School Days," was sung by the guests to the hostesses who, as "first-graders" with ribbons in their hair, waited tables.

Following the luncheon, a program, arranged by Mrs. W. H. Davis, using the subject, "Glimpses of Yesteryear," was highlighted by many and varied anecdotes of the past. The topic was chosen as a prelude to the coming 50th anniversary of the present church building, scheduled for Oct. 21. Mrs. Davis, a member of the DeWitt church since 1908, and a long-time worker in the Missionary Society, presented the program, using old Record Books of missionary groups as a source of information.

Tribute was paid to many devoted workers in the early days of the DeWitt church. Mrs. C. M. Raines, a member of the church for the past 63 years, was a special guest.

Mrs. Gerald Whitcomb is president of the W.S.G. of the DeWitt Church, and Mrs. H. E. Hampton is president of the W.S.C.S. The two organizations will hold their "Celebration" observance in November, uniting under the one name, "United Methodist Women."

P.K. (Preachers' Kids) KORNER

LT. COL. BILLY G. JONES, foster son of the Rev. and Mrs. T. T. McNeal of Paragould, was graduated with the 1972-73 regular class at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. The 10-month course prepares students for duty as commanders and principal general staff officers with the Army, primarily for wartime duty in the field.

MUSIC LEADERSHIP needed immediately — one or two experienced, dedicated persons as organist and director of choir, or choirs. Trinity United Methodist Church, Mississippi at Evergreen, Little Rock 72205, or call 666-2813.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Below is a schedule for the Daily Bible Reading, which the Board of Evangelism invites you to use as a regular guide for use in your homes.

Sept. 23—Sunday Psalm 102:16-28
Sept. 24 Psalm 103:8-22
Sept. 25 1 Cor. 1:1-10
Sept. 26 1 Cor. 10:1-13
Sept. 27 Heb. 1:1-14
Sept. 28 Heb. 6:1-10
Sept. 29 Heb. 9:1-14
Sept. 30—Sunday Deut. 28:1-14

Letter to Little Rock Conference women

Dear Participants:

The final arrangements have been made for our trip to Cincinnati. We will be leaving Little Rock from the Oak Forest United Methodist Church, 25th and Fair Park Street at 5:30 a.m. (no later) Thursday, October 4. The bus will arrive there at 5 a.m. to begin loading our luggage. You may also park your car on the church parking lot while we are gone. The time is earlier than we said before because we will be changing time zones which we had forgotten about and will be losing an hour on our trip up. We will stop in Nashville, Tenn. and eat lunch at Morrison's Cafeteria.

Because of the increase in gasoline prices, our bus fare has increased a little, but I was expecting it. Each person will owe our conference treasurer Mrs. Hubert Blakely, an additional \$1.50 as the entire bus fare is \$26.50 per person. Please do not mail this in, just hand it to her on the bus. This is only a dollar increase over our quotation.

Rates for our rooms are as follows: \$23.10 for twin rooms (\$11.55 per person) and \$29.00 for Quad rooms (\$7.25 per person) plus taxes. These are the quotations we received at the time we made reservations and we have not received any other word since so am assuming there has not been a price increase. Each individual will be responsible for paying her own hotel bill. Each district may work this out as they wish for their district officers. If your district treasurer is going, she may wish to pay it all in one payment or give each person their money to take care of their own. For individuals attending from local churches, make plans to take care of your own.

For those who will be coming into Little Rock Wednesday evening and plan to stay in hotels, may we suggest you stay in the Markham Inn, 5120 West Markham Street. This is the closest place and rates are very reasonable. Rates are \$4.43 per person for a Quad room and \$7.80 per person for twin rooms. Please let me know if you will be staying there as someone will either pick you up or the bus may make a stop there if there is enough. I know that several of you will be staying with friends and they will be bringing you to the church. I hope most of you will stay with friends and cut down on the cost of your trip.

If you need any additional information please let me know.

Yours in Christ,

Mrs. James E. Nix
Conference President



Mrs. Louise M. Gearin, who has served as a social worker in Memphis for a number of years, has been named director of the Social Service Department at Methodist Hospitals. A native of Vernon, Ala., Mrs. Gearin did her undergraduate work at Huntingdon College, Montgomery, and holds a master's degree from the University of Tennessee School of Social Work. She is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers. She is a member of St. Luke's United Methodist Church.

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Prayer for Americans to have 'constructive skepticism' proposed

ST. LOUIS, (RNS) — A prayer asking God to grant Americans "a constructive and healthy skepticism" about the government has been proposed by a columnist in a Lutheran publication issued here.

Pastor Lambert Brose, writing in The Lutheran Layman, newspaper of the Lutheran Laymen's League, said he made the proposal in light of recent political scandals, but not exclusively because of Watergate.

The clergyman, who lives in Washington, D. C., noted that many service books include prayers "For the President and Those in Authority."

He suggested that a petition for "constructive skepticism" might follow the request for divine protection of

those who govern. Pastor Brose proposed the following sentences:

"And also grant us, the citizens, a thirst for knowledge of the political events and persons that bring about the decisions by which this nation is governed; grant us further, a healthy, constructive skepticism, so that our political leaders may not be tempted to take undue advantage of a naive and ill-informed citizenry; and instill in us a right respect for public office, teaching us to adhere staunchly to the tradition that 'public office is a public trust,' and to insist that those who hold office be held strictly accountable to the public they are empowered to serve."

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News in Brief

United Methodist Bishop James Armstrong of the Dakotas Area was among organizational executives invited to Washington, D. C., Sept. 11 by Attorney General Elliot Richardson for a briefing launching the Department of Justice's Community Conflict Resolution Program.

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Some of the youth of Harrisburg United Methodist Church in Jonesboro District and their chaperons ready for departure for a week at Greers Ferry. The Rev. Tom Weir, pastor (second from left) accompanied the group.

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Measures for halting spread of Sahara Desert under study

WASHINGTON, D. C. (RNS) — Six drought-plagued West African nations may be able to retard the "spread" of the Sahara Desert as a result of a study conducted by two professors at American University here.

With the backing of the Council of Churches of the Greater Washington Area and local civic groups and congregations, Dr. Darrell Randall and Dr. Norman MacLeod recently spent three weeks investigating possibilities for long-range measures to combat drought in Niger, Mali, Chad, Upper Volta, Senegal and Mauritania.

Study of satellite photos and on-the-spot checks turned up evidences of old drainage systems and water resources near the surface, according to the team.

The six countries are experiencing severe famine. A shortage of rain has caused the desert to expand southward.

Dr. Randall, a professor of international relations, and Mr. MacLeod, a

senior research biologist, stressed that the search for long-range water needs does not undercut current emergency relief efforts.

They lauded the work of church groups in the six nations. Dr. Randall is a United Methodist layman who has performed extensive research for his denomination.

Niger's government provided equipment and technical aid for the Randall-MacLeod study. Findings will be made available to the affected countries, which would probably need international monetary assistance to undertake large-scale projects tapping new water resources.

The team found one large ranch where crop and grazing controls have halted the spread of the desert.

American University, a United Methodist institution, also assisted with the Randall-MacLeod study.

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Arkeology

by Gene Herrington

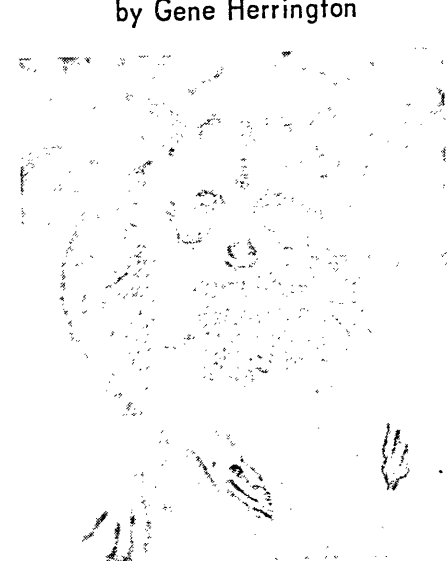


The Smackover United Methodist Youth Choir presented an original musical entitled, "In Search of Faith," written and directed by Mrs. Paul Blackmon, for the Aug. 26 evening service. The singers have done repeat performances for the Sept. 13 meeting of Methodist Men, the Sept. 18 Smackover Lions Club meeting, and Sept. 16 at Fairview United Methodist Church in Camden.

PAGE TWELVE



The Children's Choir at Smackover shown costumed for their performance at the Sunday evening, Aug. 19 service of the musical play, "Jonah and the Whalikus Mammalikus." Mrs. Paul Blackmon, choir director wrote the original play. The Rev. John F. Walker is pastor at Smackover.



If everybody tithed, nobody in the church would have to beg for money.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1973