

Hendrix College launches \$17-mill

A \$17 million capital funds campaign, to be conducted over an eight-year period, has been announced by Hendrix College. To begin in 1976, the campaign will coincide with the Arkansas United Methodist institution's centennial celebration. Announcement of the twin event was made Dec. 10 by Hendrix president Dr. Roy B. Shilling Jr. and Hendrix Board of Trustees chairman Mr. Edward Lester, a Little Rock attorney.

Dr. Shilling said the period from 1976 to 1984 "could become the most significant eight years in the history of Hendrix College, and perhaps, in the history of higher education in Arkansas." He called the fund drive "one of the most aspiring capital campaigns ever to be held in Arkansas."

The celebration will make the 100th anniversary of the founding, at Altus, Ark., of Central Collegiate Institute, Hendrix' predecessor institution. The end of the eight-year period, 1984, will mark the 100th anniversary of the purchase of that institution by what is now The United Methodist Church in Arkansas.

The school was renamed for Bishop E. R. Hendrix in 1889 and moved to Conway in 1890. It merged with Henderson-Brown College in 1929 and Galloway Woman's College in 1933.

Possible Church Drive in 1980-1984

The fund raising drive would focus, during 1976-1980, upon alumni and friends of the college and upon corporate foundations. It would anticipate a possible capital funds campaign within the two Annual Conferences of the Arkansas Area of The United Methodist Church during the quadrennium of 1980-1984. President Shilling said "We've had conversations with leaders of the Church and we've been assured that there would be strong interest in trying to work with us in that next quadrennium."

The program theme during the double centennial celebration will be "Continuity and Renewal," chosen, Dr. Shilling said, "to commemorate the rich heritage of service and leadership during our first century and to provide a setting for institutional renewal to ensure that we are in the front ranks of our nation's independent undergraduate colleges." He said that throughout the campaign the emphasis would be upon academic program enrichment.

The fund raising campaign will have three major goals: to double the current \$10 million endowment; to increase by \$5 million the unrestricted monies used in support of the educational program; and to construct two major facilities, a theatre arts center and an indoor recreation facility, the total cost of which would be \$2 million.

Dr. Shilling reported that some of the additional \$10 million would fund six to ten Visiting Distinguished Professorships, each with a \$500,000 endowment base. The remainder of the additional endowment would be used in underwriting the rising costs of the academic program, in making additional scholarships available, and in naming of distinguished professors from within the faculty as such honors were merited and funds became available.

The Hendrix president said that the successful accomplishment of the goals would enable the college to become "one of the 20 best independent liberal arts colleges in the United States."

Confident Of Success

Asked what effect inflation would have upon the drive, Dr. Shilling said he was confident the goal could be reached. "We know it's ambitious," he said, "but Hendrix is in an enviable position to reach it. It's had a very strong financial base in this state; it has many



DR. ROY B. SHILLING JR. announces Hendrix fund drive. Seated is Hendrix Board of Trustees Chairman Mr. Edward Lester of Little Rock.

friends and alumni who believe in the institution."

Dr. Shilling said that in a time when other institutions have suffered losses, Hendrix had been able to "evidence a number of counter trends, such as a stable enrollment and modest excess revenues each year and modest increments in faculty salaries and modest additions to the faculty. So we start from a very stable, strong and vital financial position. And we are absolutely confident that we can reach the goal during the eight-year period."

The last major capital funds campaign in which Hendrix was engaged was in 1966-69 when a Ford Foundation challenge grant of \$1½ million was matched by gifts of \$3 and three-quarters million.

Arkansas Methodist

Arkansas United Methodism's Newsweekly

Little Rock, Arkansas, Thursday, December 18, 1975



94th Year, No. 50

'This is Christmas to me . . .'

Arkansans share thoughts on the holy season

"What does Christmas mean to you?" "What are your thoughts at this season of the year?" During the past few days the *Arkansas Methodist* visited with a number of individuals, asking their response to such questions. Portions of those informal visits are recorded below.

First to be interviewed were three children at the Methodist Children's Home in Little Rock. The initial visit was with Gloria Ezejiro and Laura Capps. Gloria, age nine, is from Eungu, Nigeria, in West Africa. In America just two months, she is in the fifth grade at Oakhurst Elementary School. Laura, age seven, is in the first grade at Franklin Elementary School. Both are residents, with nine other girls, of Cottage Three at the Home. Their houseparents are Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Ohlsen.

Arkansas Methodist: What does Christmas mean to you, Gloria?

Gloria: What does Christmas mean to me? Christmas means to me when Christ was born! Presents. Santa Claus comes; he gives presents!

A.M.: What would you like to see happen to the world because of Christmas?

Gloria: To be happy that our Savior, Jesus Christ, is born! That's what I'd like to see.

A.M.: Laura, what does Christmas mean to you?

Laura: That Jesus was born, and Santa Claus.

A.M.: One of the nice things about Christmas is giving and receiving gifts. What would you like to have for Christmas?

Laura: A doll! And a jump rope. And a phone.

Gloria: A Kool Aid box! — that kind of Kool Aid box that skoots Kool Aid, that makes Kool Aid . . . Don't you know? You want me to show you the box?

A.M.: Why don't you just tell me what it's like . . .

Gloria: Because I can't! I've forgotten its name. I think it's "K-o-o-l A-i-d." Kool Aid box.

A.M.: What does it do?

Gloria: It makes Kool Aid!

A.M.: (Pause) Oh. (Pause.) What is the difference in Christmas in this country and in Nigeria?

Gloria: They're all the same. Christmas is all the same.

A.M.: (Pause) What would you do with a Kool Aid box?

Gloria: What would I do? I'd like it! I'd make some Kool Aid and I would share. Like when I come back from school I would share with others.

Laura: I know what I like to think about for Christmas!

A.M.: What do you like to think about, Laura?

Laura: I like to think about Santa Claus! He brings us toys. Lookie what I made — right there. Right there.

A.M.: What a pretty wreath! Did you



Gloria



Laura



Calvin

make this?

Laura: Yep. At School.

A.M.: We've talked about things we'd like to get for Christmas. What would you like to give someone else?

Laura: I know! I know! A doll! And a jump rope. And a phone.

Gloria: Like who? Like give to who? My friends in this cottage?

A.M.: Yes.

Gloria: I will think . . . (Pause.)

A.M.: What would make you most

happy at Christmas to give to . . .

Laura: Santa Claus!

Gloria: Everything will make me most happy, because I'm happy at Christmas. I'm very, very happy, because it was when our Savior was born, so I have to be happy at Christmas . . .

Laura: Are you really going to put this in the newspaper?

Gloria: Newspaper?! Laurie and me? You're going to put this in the newspaper?

Our next visit was with Calvin Cotton, also a resident of the Methodist Children's Home. Twelve years old, Calvin is in the seventh grade at Southwest Middle School. He and five other boys live in Cottage Seven where their housemother is Mrs. Carrie Godbey.

Arkansas Methodist: Calvin, what is the most exciting thing to you about Christmas?

Calvin: Giving gifts.

A.M.: Why?

Calvin: Because the Wise Men gave gifts to Jesus.

A.M.: What do you think would make the world most happy at Christmas?

Calvin: (Pause) I really don't know that . . . More love, I guess.

A.M.: What is it that makes Christmas such a happy time?

Calvin: Friends being close to each other, and the exchanging of gifts.

A.M.: What do you want for Christmas?

Calvin: A football.

A.M.: Do you play football in school? Do they have it in Middle School?

Calvin: Yes, they have it, but I didn't sign up because I'm too small.

A.M.: Have you thought about what you want to be when you grow up?

Calvin: Yes — a policeman or a professional football player.

A.M.: You said that you go to St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Is your Sunday School class getting ready for Christmas?

Calvin: Yes — we've been talking a lot about it and we've written "Merry Christmas" on the board, and things like that.

(Continued on page three)

Jerusalem Convocation in early 1976

Space is still available for a Jan. 27-Feb. 2, 1976 Convocation on Biblical Studies in Jerusalem for Clergy and Laity. Sponsored jointly by an ad hoc committee of the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church and Educational Opportunities, Inc. (non-profit), the event will focus on "Jesus — His Life, Time, Land and Hebrew Faith." Mr. Winfred D. Polk of Corning has been named by Bishop Eugene M. Frank as the Arkansas coordinator for the convocation.

Some 1,000 persons are expected to participate in the event, which will feature addresses by outstanding scholars and visits to Holy Land sites. Mr. Polk states that the convocation, the basic cost of which is \$799, "offers an unequalled opportunity for both ministers and lay persons to grow in their knowledge of the life of Jesus." Persons desiring detailed information on the convocation may write to Mr. Winfred D. Polk, P.O. Box 72, Corning, Ark. 72422.

Mr. Polk will also serve as the Arkansas coordinator for another event co-sponsored by the Council of Bishops' committee, the third annual convention on "The Movement of the Holy Spirit in the Developing Churches," to be held Aug. 9-24, 1976 in Utrecht, Holland. Information on that event may also be obtained from Mr. Polk.

NEXT ARKANSAS METHODIST JANUARY 1, 1976

In keeping with our custom of many years, we will not publish during the week in which Christmas occurs. Your next issue of ARKANSAS METHODIST will be dated Jan. 1, 1976. Sunday School lessons for Dec. 28, 1975 and Jan. 4, 1976 appear on pages 8 and 9 of this issue. Bible Readings for the period from Dec. 21 through Jan. 4 may be found on page six.



Children's Home Board Meets

Reelected to a second term of office at the Dec. 11 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Children's Home were Mr. Homer H. Fulbright (second from right) of Searcy, chairman; the Rev. Harold Sadler (right) of Humphrey, vice chairman; and Mr. R. B. Newcome (left) of Portland, secretary. They are shown with Bishop Eugene M. Frank (second from left) and Home Superintendent the Rev. Edwin Keith.

Dr. Christie named first Distinguished Professor at Hendrix

Dr. M. Francis Christie, dean of Hendrix College, has been named the Willis H. Holmes distinguished professor in religion and philosophy at Hendrix. The endowed professorship, the first in the history of the college, was made possible by a gift of the late Mr. Holmes, a member of the Little Rock law firm of House, Holmes and Jewell. A 1921 magna cum laude graduate of Hendrix, Mr. Holmes served on the college's Board of Trustees from 1964 until his death Jan. 11, 1975. He received the college's distinguished alumnus award in 1971.

Dr. Christie, who has been academic dean at Hendrix since 1965, will leave that post to devote full time to teaching. Dr. Roy B. Shilling Jr., Hendrix president, has named a special advisory committee to assist in finding a successor to Christie as academic dean.

During his tenure as dean, Dr. Christie was instrumental in the development and growth of the college's academic program, in curriculum development, in the establishment of new degree requirements, and in the creation

of faculty enrichment programs.

He has served as president of the Arkansas Dean's Association and as dean, for two years, at the Graz Center in Graz, Austria. He also headed a selection committee for Fulbright-Hays scholars. He has authored numerous articles in professional journals and is listed in "Who's Who in America."

A 1944 graduate of Hendrix, Christie earned the B.D. and M.A. degrees from SMU in 1947 and the Ph.D. degree from Vanderbilt University in 1952. He was an instructor in religion at SMU and was professor of religion at Birmingham-Southern College. He was later dean and professor of philosophy and religion at Simpson College, Indianola, Ia., and subsequently held the same positions at Mount Union College, Alliance, Ohio, before coming to Hendrix in 1965.

A native of Emerson, Ark., Dr. Christie is married to the former Joann Finley of Cotter. They have three children, Catherine and Christine, both graduates of Hendrix, and John, currently a junior at Hendrix.

The Rev. Robert Riggins

Portland-Wilmot pastor dies

The Rev. Robert L. Riggins, pastor of the Portland and Wilmot United Methodist Churches and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Little Rock Conference, died Dec. 11. He had been working in the yard at the Wilmot church when stricken with an apparent heart attack. He was taken to a hospital at Lake Village where physicians were unable to revive him. He was in his fourth year as pastor of the two churches. He was 66.

Born Oct. 28, 1909 at Crossett, Mr. Riggins attended the then Arkansas A & M College at Monticello. He had been a minister in the Little Rock Annual Conference for 32 years.

Pastoral appointments served by Mr. Riggins were Green Hill Circuit, Hermitage, Keo Charge, Foreman, Bayou Meto-Lodges Corner-Brewers Chapel, Bearden, Timothy-Westside in Camden, Tillar Circuit, Grady, Good Faith in Pine Bluff and Portland-Wilmot.

Mr. Riggins was a past chaplain for the Arkansas Department of Correction's prisons. He was active in the Quapaw Area Council of Boy Scouts of America and was a Mason. He had recently participated in minister's "We Care Missions" in the Hamburg and DeWitt churches.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Bettie Mae Dillon Riggins; three sons, Dale Riggins of California and Don and Dean Riggins, both of Little Rock; a daughter, Mrs. Ann Ashcraft of Jones Mill, and 11 grandchildren.

The funeral service was Dec. 14 at Wilmot United Methodist Church with the Rev. Everett M. Vinson, superintendent of the Monticello District and the Rev. Joe R. Phillips, pastor of St. James United Methodist Church, Little Rock, officiating. Burial was at Wilmot Cemetery.

TO ALL CHURCH TREASURERS AND MINISTERS:

You are reminded that all apportionments for 1975 are due on or before December 31, 1975. Please get your payments in as early as possible.

Grafton Thomas,
Area Treasurer

'Committed to Christ — Called to Change'

Proposed theme for denomination's 1977-80 quadrennium

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (UMC) — The United Methodist Church will move into the 1977-80 quadrennium under the banner, "Committed to Christ — Called to Change," if a proposal recommended here is adopted by the denomination's General Conference.

The church's highest legislative body will be asked to adopt the quadrennial theme at its meeting in Portland, Ore., in April, 1976 in response to "hungers of humankind," and specifically hunger for: salvation, love, meaning, food, community, knowledge and justice. The proposed theme is related to a verse of Scripture, "Do not be conformed, but be transformed" (Romans 12:2 RVS).

The theme was approved by the General Council on Ministries (GCOM) meeting here Dec. 2-5, and will be forwarded to General Conference. The action climaxes a long process of gathering data and opinion from across the church, testing suggested themes and consideration of specific proposals from various sources including the Council of Bishops which called for a theme incorporating evangelism and world hunger.

In adopting the theme, the GCOM encouraged "all in the denomination to respond to it in their programming."

The presentation to GCOM indicated the theme did not contemplate setting up an office and staff to

implement the theme and that it was not a "packaged, handed-down program or emphasis." The proposal carries no call for a financial emphasis, and cost of the theme promotion is not to exceed \$25,000 annually, to be requested from general church contingency funds.

The Rev. Paul A. Duffey, Montgomery, Ala., chairperson of the GCOM Section on Planning and Research, said it is hoped the theme will bring forth many responses to "hungers of humankind," including responses from general agencies, annual conferences, local churches and other units. "We hope there will be involvement in many ways," he said.

The GCOM asked General Conference to authorize a special coordinating task force to help in implementation, the group to comprise representatives from the Council of Bishops, GCOM and seven other general agencies.

A motion that the theme not be approved was defeated. In making the motion, James Dolliver, Olympia, Wash., said that the theme "is not going to mean much in the local church" and would "sink without a trace."

Background material on the theme said it could bring "healing and wholeness to the Christian community," adding:

"Christians have often spoken of the need to join word and deed. The split between the personal and

social dimensions of the gospel, a phenomenon peculiar to the United States, has continued since before the turn of the century. As John Wesley (founder of Methodism) in his day sought to reunite knowledge and vital piety, so we would seek to better relate evangelism and mission."

The GCOM gave final approval to a document entitled "The Kingdom in Our Midst" and recommended it to General Conference for adoption for the new quadrennium. The document lists "seven vital concerns" which local churches are asked to "examine carefully."

"Deeper Personal Commitment to Christ," "Strengthening the Local Church," "Full Participation by Lay Persons," "Concern for Persons," "Values and Ethics in Public and Private Life," "Living as Good Stewards in an Age of Scarcity," "Future of Church-Related Institutions."

Also pointed up in the document are several "perspectives" which "deserve to influence the way any church deals with the concerns on its agenda:" theological understanding, global involvement, an ecumenical and interreligious style, relating to systems, racial and ethnic pluralism, world hunger and communications.

The theme and "The Kingdom in Our Midst" grew primarily out of work by the Interagency Staff Task Force on Planning and the GCOM Section on Planning and Research.

'This is Christmas . . .'

(Continued from page one)



Dave and Doug Ford

We visited next with twin brothers Dave and Doug Ford, juniors at Joe T. Robinson High School in the Pulaski County Special School District. Sons of Mr. and Mrs. C. V. Ford, they are members of the Mountain View United Methodist Church. After high school Dave plans to attend either Hendrix College or West Point and then enter law school. Doug is interested in pursuing pre-medical studies.

Arkansas Methodist: What comes to mind as you think about Christmas this year?

Dave: Well, of course, the birth of Christ first of all. And the many things that are a part of the season, like the nativity scenes . . .

Doug: And it's really gotten pretty commercial, too. But I think that's changing back more now. People seem to be more serious; they seem to be more "upset" about things like putting out toys earlier each year, and so forth. I just think people are more concerned. Everyone wants world peace. It may have always been like that — I haven't been around that long!

A.M.: Are young people becoming more interested in religion?

Dave: For a while it was like "everyone doing their own thing," you know. But now, at least in this school, our largest club is the Christian organization — Teens for Christ. And it seems to be growing more and more in other schools.

A.M.: How do you account for that?

Doug: I think it's because youth are more sincere, more serious, now.

A.M.: Why do you think that is so?

Doug: I've wondered sometimes if it wasn't Watergate.

Dave: Well, you know, we're seeing so many bad things that are happening around the country — and maybe youth feel we need to change before it gets too late.

Doug: I think The Living Bible has something to do with it, too. It's more easy to read and to understand.

A.M.: Are youth reading the Bible more, with these new translations?

Doug: Yes — I know I am.

Dave: I think so. Because, you know, before you had to kind of guess at what it said. Now it explains it better.

A.M.: What with all the bad news around these days, how do you feel about the future?

Dave: I'm optimistic, really.

A.M.: Why?

Dave: Well — just talking to my friends helps me to be that way. They all seem to be optimistic. That helps!

A.M.: If you could give the world a Christmas present, what would it be?

Dave: Well — peace, certainly. And health. And understanding.

Arkansas Methodist

Established 1882

Official newspaper of the Little Rock and North Arkansas Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church

Editor and Business Manager John S. Workman
Associate Editor Doris Woolard
Editorial Assistant and Bookkeeper Karen Compton
Office Secretary Kathleen Storey
Circulation Manager Jane Raiford
Poetry Editor Barbara L. Mulkey
Contributing Editors Alf A. Eason
Myers B. Curtis

Officers — Board of Managers

Chairman Edward G. Matthews
Vice Chairman Charles Casteel
Secretary Kenneth Parker

PUBLISHED every Thursday except weeks of July 4 and Dec. 25 at United Methodist Headquarters 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.

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE to Box 3547, Little Rock, Ark. 72203. Articles other than editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor.

EDITORIAL and business offices located in United Methodist Headquarters Building, 715 Center Street, Little Rock, Ark.

NEWS SERVICES: United Methodist Communications (UMC), United Methodist boards and agencies: Religious News Service (RNS), National Council of Churches, and others.

ADVERTISING RATES on request. Represented nationally by Jacob's List, Inc., Clinton, S.C. 29325. Products or services advertised are not necessarily endorsed by this newspaper or by The United Methodist Church.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$4.00 per year.

MEMBER: Associated Church Press, United Methodist Press Association



Mrs. Birch

'My thoughts return to the baby Jesus . . .'

'This is Christmas to me,' says United Methodist layperson

Myrtle (Mrs. McLane) Birch is a member of White Memorial United Methodist Church in Little Rock where she is chairperson of the Work Area on Social Concerns, co-chairperson of the Commission on Education, a teacher in the Sunday School, and a member of the choir. She is a teacher of science and math in the special education department at Henderson Middle School. Her husband is associated with Bill Plunkett's Automotive Service. They have one son, a faculty member at Wayne State University in Detroit. Mrs. Birch responded to our invitation by putting some of her thoughts about Christmas in written form. Her statement follows.

"To me, Christmas means love, love, love! It is the time of the year that you can give your love without reservation and just give 'Christmas' as your reason for giving so freely.

"As I look at the bright lights and hear the beautiful carols of Christmas, my thoughts return to the baby Jesus and his birthday. I will forget what I have done for other people and remember what others have done for me. I will ignore what the world owes me and think of what I owe the world. I will put my rights in the background, my duties in the middle distance, and my chance to do a little more than my duty in the foreground. I will close my book of complaints against the management of the universe and look around me for a place where I can sow a few seeds of happiness. This is Christmas to me!

"And, too, I can consider the needs and the desires of little children. I can remember the weakness and loneliness of persons who are growing old. I can bear in mind the things that other people have to bear in their hearts. I can try to understand what those who live in the same house with me really want without waiting for them to tell me. And I can 'trim my lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke.' This is Christmas to me!

"I believe love is the strongest thing in the world — stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death. And that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem 19 hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love. This is Christmas to me!"

†



Mr. Vail

Mr. Albert Vail of Little Rock is a member of Asbury United Methodist Church. He is 93 years old and is a member of the Hightower Sunday School Class. A retired machinist, he did contract machine work for Arkansas Foundry Company, the Arkansas Gazette and other concerns. Mr. Vail has been shut in for a short time due to a fall but hopes soon to be back in attendance at his church. His pastor says of Mr. Vail, "He is one of our most faithful and devoted members."

Arkansas Methodist: What does Christmas mean to you, Mr. Vail?

Mr. Vail: It means a great joy to me! In fact, inasmuch as Christ is involved, I think of it all the time.

A.M.: What do you believe the Christmas message means to the world today?

Mr. Vail: Well, it should mean everything to them, but apparently it's not "hitting" everyone. I suspect it's just commercialized to the point where all that people think about is the dollar or a "present"! People have more things to attract their attention these days — away from the church and such things.

A.M.: What do you think it would take to make people more aware of the real meaning of Christmas?

Mr. Vail: Well, it'll take more than an earthquake! (laughter).

A.M.: As you look back over your 93 years, are there any Christmases which stand out above the others?

Mr. Vail: Yes — over 80 years ago, at the old Ebenezer Methodist Church, at 13th and Marshall Streets. The people there were very devout. I can see that big old Christmas tree now. The children came out in line, and they'd make their speeches from memory. They'd recite scripture and poetry and they'd sing, too — all about Kris Kringle and Santa Claus, you know.

I'll never forget one Christmas there. My oldest brother was Santa Claus. He dressed up in a Santa outfit. And right outside the window of the church was an old well, the boards around it were all rotten. So here comes my brother, hootin' and hollerin' and "ho, ho, hoin'" and all. And when he left the room, he jumped right out the window and almost went into that well! That was a Christmas to remember!

A.M.: Considering the present times, how do you feel about the future?

Mr. Vail: Well, I'm optimistic! Why shouldn't I be an optimist? God has brought us out of things for thousands of years and he brought us up to where we are. And he can do it again!

A.M.: What do you think about the youth of today?

Mr. Vail: Well, they've got everything to make them smart. Our youngsters are very smart nowadays. They're ahead of what I was! (laughter). But, of course, they can't play baseball any better than I did! (laughter).

(Continued on page four)

Council Directors to Local Churches

Jurisdictional Events at Mt. Sequoyah — 1976

Local Churches, the Districts, and the Annual Conferences need to be aware of these important training events at Mt. Sequoyah during 1976. As your unit plans its program and training for 1976, be sure to include one or more of these enterprises:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| June 6-10 | Mt. Sequoyah Ecumenical Mission Conference |
| June 13-18 | West Gulf Regional — United Methodist Women |
| June 21-24 | Bishop's Week |
| July 17-23 | Lab/Seminar (Age-Level) |
| Sept. 21-23 | District Superintendents/Conference Staff Consultation |
| Oct. 11-14 | The Best Is Yet To Be (Retirees) |
| Oct. 20-23 | My Job Training (Work Areas and Age-Levels) |
| Oct. 21-22 | Interpretation of General Conference Legislation (CFA — Treasurers — Statisticians — Secretaries — Council Directors) |
| Oct. 23-24 | Mini-Workshop — Pastor as Teacher and Planning a Church Program |

Now, let me call your specific attention to "My Job Training," Oct. 20-23. This event is planned for Councils on Ministries (Local Church — District — Conference). It will include work groups on each work area, on each age-level, and a work group for Chairpersons of Councils on Ministries. As we planned this training event we were quite conscious of the need for job training on every level. Any Council on Ministries (Local Church — District — Conference) would do well to include this event in your planning for 1976!

Christmas Greetings from Your Council Office



Each member of the staff of both Conference Offices sends the warmest of Christmas Greetings to each of you. All through the year we feel that we are "on your team" as we work to help implement the programs in local churches, sub-districts, districts, and the conferences. All through the year, but especially at Christmas time, we like to remember that the work which you do and the work which we do is all designed to help build the Kingdom of our Lord!

A Christmas Prayer

"We thank Thee, Father, for Christmas, for Thine own coming into the world that we might not walk in darkness but have the light of life! Forgive us for not accepting fully Thy gift in childlike trust. Make our lives genuine through Thy great love. May our joy be real and far-reaching. Father, help us to see and to help spread the Light that came for those who sit in the darkness of sin, fear, and death. Make us messengers of Thy peace. Make us people of good will that the world may sing with joy its glory to Thee. Because of Thy love given to us in Christ we pray. Amen."

—Nels F. S. Ferre,
Prayers of the Modern Era

'This is Christmas . . .'

(Continued from page three)

Mr. Polk



Mr. Winfred Polk of Corning is a member of that city's First United Methodist Church where he currently serves as chairman of its Administrative Board. He is a member of the Council on Ministries of the Paragould District, the Council on Finance and Administration of the North Arkansas Conference, is a District commissioner of the Methodist Children's Home and a member of the Board of Directors of Aldersgate, Inc. He is in the automobile dealership business.

Arkansas Methodist: Mr. Polk, what are your thoughts at this Christmas time?

Mr. Polk: One of the big impressions I get is that Christmas results in a "softening." A softening of people's attitudes towards others. People are more interested in the other person as an individual — there's a more personal feeling. A spirit of generosity is instilled. The Christmas spirit seems to bring all those things out.



Bolivian Federation of Women

A committee meeting of Bolivian Federation of Methodist Women, in which missionary Helen Wilson participated. Left to right: Ligia Espinoza, former Crusade Scholar; Annette Morris, missionary; Maria Rosa Quispe Vargas, and Esther Arias, wife of the Bishop of Bolivia's Evangelical Methodist Church.

Letter from Helen Wilson

After December 15, 1975
835 Quapaw Avenue
Hot Springs, Ark. 71901

... and the angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for God loves you dearly. You are going to be a Mother of a Son, and you will call him Jesus (the Saviour) for it is he who will save his people from their sins." I belong to the Lord, body and soul," replied Mary. . . . "let it happen as you say."

J. B. Phillips: Luke and Matthew

Just as Mary the Mother of Jesus was a very special woman chosen by God, I want to tell you about two special persons in Bolivia also named Mary (Maria in Spanish) who have been chosen by God and who have responded with "body and soul."

Senorita Maria Rosa Quispe is a typical petite Bolivian with black hair, sparkling dark eyes and olive complexion. She is a deaconess serving as the Executive Secretary of Christian Education of the Evangelical Methodist Church in Bolivia. My particular contact with her is in the area of women's work for which I have been the national promoter for three years.

As well as speaking the Aymara language she has a special rapport with the women and they have great confidence in her. We recently worked together in an "Encounter" for 100 Aymara women in a railroad/agricultural area at 15,000 ft. They were most eager to learn more of God's word and about health and hygiene to take better care of their families. Singing and praying together was a rich spiritual experience.

Senora Maria Luisa Vargas is an ordained pastor serving as chaplain of our school in Trinidad. Her husband is the Director, so they make a terrific team and witness with their 3 children. She works also with the women in this tropical area where she was born.

In this International Year of the Woman we have had special seminars for the preparation of women and made plans for future projects.

The Church is in a state of reorganization. A Commission, with a broad base representation of the various cultures here, is meeting at intervals to prepare for the adoption of a new structure at the General Assembly in January, 1976. May you pray with us that a more authentic Bolivian Church will emerge.

As my address indicates, I will be returning to the U.S.A. in December to rejoin my Mother, other family members, and Arkansas Methodist Family! It will be my privilege to share with you our work in Bolivia during the Bicentennial Year '76.

At this significant festival of the birth of the Christ, may we each rededicate our lives and say as Mary did, "I belong to the Lord, body and soul."

Love in Him,
Helen B. Wilson

I know we speak a lot about commercialism, but the season does bring out this softening of feelings. People relax in their defenses. Their selfishness breaks down. I would venture to say that we receive twice the offering for the Children's Home at Christmas than we would at any other time. People are just more interested in others. We can see needs that we just don't see at any other season.

A.M.: What special relevance do you see in the Christmas message for our world today?

Mr. Polk: Well, certainly the answer for the problems of the world is in the Christmas message. If there is any message in the Christian religion it's one of love, of care for your fellowman, of justice toward others, of the value of the life of the individual as a human being, as an intellect, as a person. The terror of the age today is the brutalization of our society! The value and worth of the individual is not recognized. Remember — Christ was interested in the publican and the sinner and in any human being. The Church has got to focus on the individual!

A.M.: What about gifts? What would you "like to get for Christmas?"

Mr. Polk: To be frank, there's hardly been a time in my life that I could honestly say that I really wanted anybody to give me anything. I don't get much pleasure out of just "receiving a gift." I do get pleasure out of giving gifts. But don't misunderstand me — I do get a very real pleasure in knowing that someone thought of me. The pleasure is in the thought, the love, certainly, more than in the gift itself.

NEWS and opinion

summary by Doris Woolard

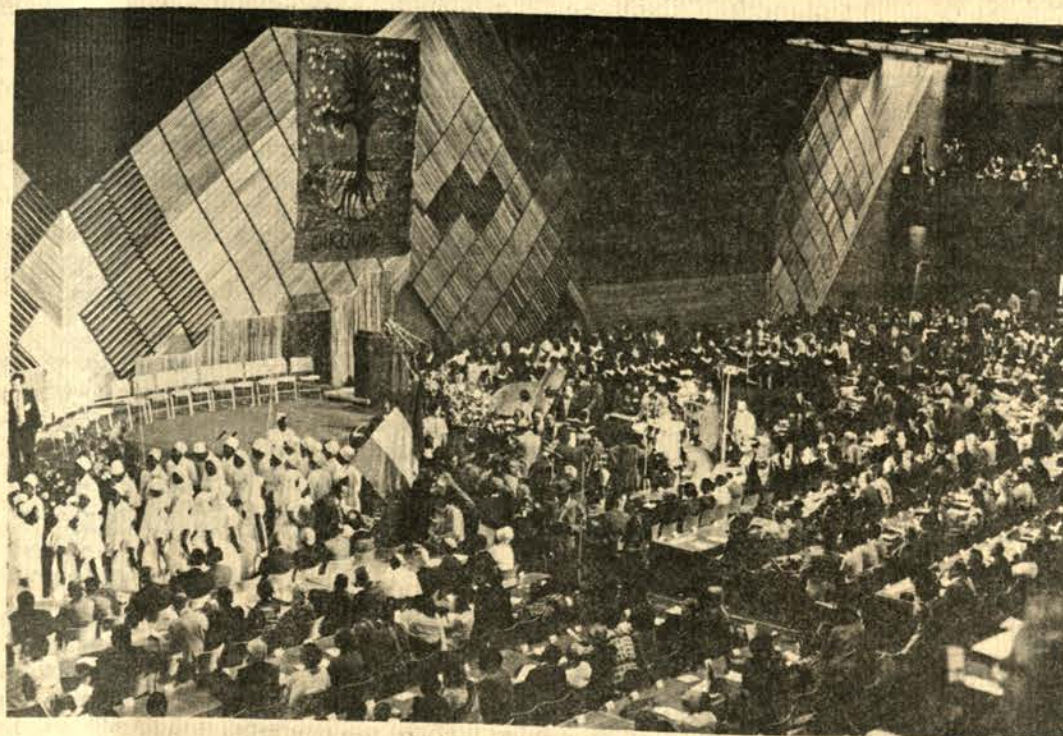


Episcopal Presiding Bishop John Allin says in his Christmas message: "... Gifts offered in Christmastide, or any other time, are not Christmas gifts unless given with love. The Christian Church has no enabling gifts of any worth apart from the love of Christ to share with others. Gifts of goods and services to others are Christian offerings when they transmit the spirit of Christ and offer the renewing possibilities of the life found in Him."

The Rev. Carrie Hunter, a staff associate with the National Council of Churches, commenting on the 1975 Christmastide season, said "from the rational and intellectual viewpoint things seem to be going from bad to worse. A general spirit of depression among people is slipping across the nation." "But on spiritual reflection, even in our situation there is hope," said Mr. Hunter. "I feel very hopeful that despite our problems and the many mistakes nationally and internationally — there are still people who have the vision of what the Kingdom of God and Kingdom building are all about."

Dr. James R. Crumley Jr., secretary of the Lutheran Church in America, said that the joy of Christmas "comes loud and clear despite either political or economic problems. The message of hope from Heaven is not earth-centered. It is not determined by the world situation." "Sometimes the hopeful message comes through more strongly in times of deepest need," said Dr. Crumley. "It is a real and tangible feeling that reminds us over and over that the real direction is from God to man."

Some 5,000 participants, Kenyans and persons in Nairobi for the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, gathered under the blazing sun for a hillside Advent Rally in Uhuru ("Freedom") Park. They heard Anglican Bishop Festo Kieyengere of Uganda declare: "I believe in a God that can change things, but I don't believe in destructive change. I hate oppression and injustice but I will die before I will change it with spears and guns. That is not the way Jesus changes things." Bishop Kieyengere appealed to those present to join in "Christ's operation rescue" and to heal wounds, interpersonal and international."



Opening of World Council's Fifth Assembly

NAIROBI — Christians from 100 nations fill Nairobi's Kenyatta Conference Center for the opening celebration of the World Council of Churches' Fifth Assembly. More than 700 delegates representing member Churches, plus

observers, guests and advisors heard the songs of several African peoples, were led in prayers of intercession and were preached to by the Rev. Seth Nomenyo of the Evangelical Church of Togo. (RNS Photo)

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, founding editor of Christianity Today — now lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, has written an open letter to President Ford in the January issue of Evangel. Dr. Henry writes: "Americans yearn for their President to put his life on the line politically and to lead judiciously now instead of bargaining for future political opportunities. This may require facing the hostility of powerful power blocs and lobbies; it may mean firing our nation's sagging conscience to a fresh sensitivity of justice and truth."

Protestant Church leaders in East Germany are reportedly concerned about the number of pastors, theological students and church staff appealing for permission to emigrate to West Germany. Applicants, who are concerned about such matters as securing Christian education for their children, base their appeals on provisions of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. About 20 active pastors have recently emigrated with their families, and others are expected to seek permission to leave. Government officials have been approving the applications, presumably on the grounds that productive capacity will not suffer because of their departure.

Ruby Hay, a secretary and member of the over-30 singles organization at Calvary Baptist Church in New York, said the group decided this year to make toys for children in a local cancer ward instead of buying presents for friends. "Because of the financial crunch," she said, "it seems many of us have become more concerned in doing more for others — not just spending money but making better use of all our resources."

Protestant Fundamentalists In Israel Mark 10th Anniversary Of Village

ACRE, Israel (RNS) — Protestant fundamentalists marked the 10th anniversary of their experimental village, Nes Amin, founded near here in 1965 as a gesture of atonement for crimes and persecutions perpetrated on Jews by Christians over the centuries.

Perched atop a hill a few miles from the Crusaders' fortress, Nes Amin, the cooperative village has more than 100 young people, mainly from the Netherlands, the United States and Switzerland. There is a waiting list for Protestant fundamentalists who wish to join the village.

Over the past 10 years, the village has become one of Israel's chief exporters of roses and other flowers to Europe.

Israeli neighbors, who are admittedly non-religious and cynical of spirituality, said they envy the Christian group for its devotion to their main principle of atonement for crimes against Jews.



WCC Assembly: Tent City

NAIROBI — Delegates to the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches walk to lunch in a tent city which was set up near Nairobi's Kenyatta Conference Center to serve as lunchrooms for participants. The local arrangements committee organized daily outdoor lunches for the Assembly in a plaza just outside the Center and offered good food, fresh air and a chance for delegates to meet and talk with each other. (RNS Photo)

Senator Charles Percy (Ill.), a member of the delegation which visited mainland China in August, reported to a weekly Senate Prayer Breakfast Group in Washington that only Peking and a few other cities in the People's Republic of China are known to have regular Christian church services. "From our observations," Sen. Percy told his colleagues, "party membership is not granted to anyone who practices a religious belief. Attendance at a university and certain other privileges also would be denied."

Printing and distribution of 50,000 copies of a new Polish translation of the Bible is underway in Poland. The new translation, called the Millennium Bible, has been so-named in commemoration of the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Poland, celebrated in 1966. The new translation is sponsored by the eight Protestant and Orthodox churches in the Polish Ecumenical Council, which includes the Polish Methodist Church.

A new Census Bureau study reveals that black students are entering college in numbers nearly equal to their proportion in the U.S. population — but their dropout rates appear significantly higher.

Dr. Franklin T. Fowler, medical consultant to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, says in a mission study text used in local churches of the denomination, that the concept of "medical missions" must give way to "world health care ministry" in recognition of broader aspects of health need. Dr. Fowler says strategy must shift from a "curative approach" to a more comprehensive approach that includes preventive medicine, family planning, nutrition efforts and other programs.

Dr. Philip Potter, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, appealed to the news media in a press conference during the Council's Assembly, to give a "fairer presentation" of the ecumenical organization's activities, rather than over-emphasizing its socio-political programs.

A document entitled "Confessing Christ Today," was adopted by the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches and referred to member Churches for study and action. "We deplore widespread, cheap conversions without consequences," the evangelism report says, emphasizing that true Christianity requires church members to apply the principles of their faith to world problems. It deplores "conversions without witness to Christ," and "a superficial Gospel preaching, an empty Gospel without a call into personal and communal discipleship."

News from the churches

THE REV. ROY E. POYNOR, pastor of Cherokee Village Church, was guest speaker for a recent revival at First Church, Batesville. Mr. Bill Mann, evangelistic singer, presented special music.

UNITED METHODIST MEN of Central Avenue Church, Batesville, hosted a Ladies' Night recently with the Rev. Dois Kennedy, pastor of First Church, Batesville, presenting the program.

CLAY COUNTY United Methodist Men met in Corning for an oyster and fish dinner on Ladies' Night Thursday, Dec. 4th.

SALEM United Methodist Church in Batesville District welcomed as speakers for its Thanksgiving celebration two former pastors, the Rev. Kenneth Renfro of Bald Knob, and the Rev. B. W. Stallcup of Hardy. Other participating ministers were the Rev. Pharis Holifield, pastor at Horseshoe Bend, and the Rev. Dubois Pettit, host pastor.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN of Mansfield Church in Fort Smith District were guests at a Christmas Coffee in the home of President-elect, Mrs. Kay Mannon. Mrs. C. R. Boyd, retiring president, presided and presented an inspirational Christmas message. A biblical and historical presentation of the Christmas story was given by Mrs. Leslie Van Riper. Newly elected officers for the Mansfield unit, in addition to the president, include: Mrs. Lorene McCain, vice president; Mrs. Jody Williams, secretary, and Mrs. Ruth Van Riper, treasurer. The program closed as UMW members, led by Mrs. Patti Kleeb, formed a prayer circle.

DR. JOHN P. MILES, pastor of First Church, Arkadelphia, was guest speaker for revival services held at Amity United Methodist Church. Special music was presented by Clark County Judge Randall Mathis.

THE REV. JON GUTHRIE, campus minister at Hendrix College, and Mr. Willis McAlpin, were the speakers for the pre-Thanksgiving program on world hunger at First Church, Conway. Mr. Guthrie, a former missionary to the Congo (now Zaire), discussed the work of the Methodist Committee on Overseas Relief, and Mr. McAlpin spoke concerning Heifer Project International. The program, sponsored by the Work Area on Missions, also featured a film entitled, "Beyond the Next Harvest."

CONWAY DISTRICT Parsonettes officers for 1975-76 are: President, Wilma Mooney; Vice President, Mardell McClurkin; Secretary, Melba Ramsey; Scrapbook Secretary, Linda Kennedy, and Reporter, Carlyn Clemmons.

Daily Bible Readings

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

Dec. 21—Sunday John 1:1-14
Dec. 22 Luke 1:26-38
Dec. 23 Luke 1:46-55
Dec. 24 Luke 1:67-79
Dec. 25 Luke 2:1-20
Dec. 26 Matt. 1:18-25
Dec. 27 Matt. 2:1-12
Dec. 28—Sunday Psalm 71:16-24
Dec. 29 Psalm 43:1-5
Dec. 30 Romans 12:9-21
Dec. 31 Romans 15:1-13
Jan. 1 John 10:22-29
Jan. 2 John 14:1-14
Jan. 3 John 17:1-26
Jan. 4—Sunday Deut. 30:11-20

"A CHRISTMAS KALEIDOSCOPE" of music was presented by the Collegiate Choir of Philander Smith College, at Wesley Church, Little Rock, Sunday, Dec. 14. The late afternoon concert, directed by Mrs. Henrietta Yancy Hock, included traditional and folk music, international and national compositions.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN of Indian Hills Church, North Little Rock, netted \$1,253 on a recent bazaar. Earnings were used for the purchase of such items as a floor polisher, card tables, record players, and toys for the children's classrooms. In addition the women contributed \$300 to special missions projects and \$100 to Aldersgate Camp.

UNITED METHODIST MEN of First Church, Newport, escorted residents of the Jackson County School for Retarded Children to Memphis Saturday, Dec. 13. The group visited the Enchanted Forest at Goldsmith's Department Store and dined together.

HANDBELL CHOIRS AT SEARCY RECORD

An album of music by handbell choirs of First Church, Searcy, is scheduled for release Dec. 21. Under the direction of Monty R. Bell, that church's director of music, the Annie Cowen, Jane Rand, and Ringleaders choirs combined to record an LP-stereo album entitled "Handbell's Jubilation" with the Recorded Publications Co. of Camden, N.J. The album consists of 21 selections ranging from classical to contemporary music, in addition to hymn and folk music. Two special Christmas selections and one number featuring Mr. Bell on the marimba are included.

WORD HAS COME to the Arkansas Methodist of the death Nov. 23 of Mrs. Lewis V. Chesser Sr., of Andalusia, Ala., mother of the Rev. Lewis V. Chesser Jr., campus minister of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Arkansas. Among other survivors are her husband, Lewis V. Chesser Sr., and two daughters, Mrs. Gail Nickelson of Red Level, Ala., and Mrs. Jeanne Hinton of Daytona Beach, Fla. The funeral service was held Nov. 27 at Andalusia with the Rev. Ben Sawada, pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Andalusia and the Rev. Woodrow Plant, of the Baptist Church, officiating.

WORD HAS BEEN RECEIVED of the death of Mr. Bradford Eric Anderson of Summerville, S.C., a resident during the 1920's of Thornton, Ark. While living in Thornton, where Mr. Anderson was associated with the Stout Lumber Company, the Andersons were active members of the Thornton Methodist Church. Mr. Anderson was a graduate of Greenville College and the International Accountants Society. He was a member of the Bethany United Methodist Church, was a past president of the Summerville Chamber of Commerce and was listed in Who's Who in the South and Southwest. Among his survivors are his wife and four children.

Personalia

MR. AND MRS. R. E. WILSON, long time members of Ebenezer United Methodist Church, Stephens, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary with an open house in their home on Saturday, Dec. 27, from 2 to 5 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson are the grandparents of the Rev. Therral Wilson of Gillette, Ark. The Wilsons invite their friends to share in this special celebration.

THE SINGLE ADULT FELLOWSHIP, a new organization sponsored by the Council on Ministries of Winfield United Methodist Church, Little Rock, met at Winfield Church late Sunday afternoon, Dec. 7 for refreshments, fellowship, fun and carol singing. Future gatherings and programs are planned for the organization which is open to singles of all denominations in the area. Leading the group are Mrs. George Antolik and Ms. Erna Rudi.

Winfield Choir Presenting 'Christmas Oratorio' by Saint-Saens

The Sanctuary Choir of Winfield United Methodist Church, Little Rock, will present "Christmas Oratorio" by Camille Saint-Saens on Sunday morning Dec. 21 at the 10:50 a.m. service. The Sanctuary Choir and soloists will be accompanied by members of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. George Antolik of the UALR Music faculty and director of music at Winfield, will conduct.

THE REV. JOE L. KENNEDY of Danville was the guest preacher for a recent revival at Quitman United Methodist Church.

'Evening of American Christmas Music' at Pulaski Heights Church

The fourth in a series of "Events of Advent" at Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock will be the presentation, on Sunday evening, Dec. 21, by 210 members of the church's music ministry of "An Evening of American Christmas Music." The musicians will be attired in costumes of Early America. The public is invited.

Other events in the series have included a Family Advent Fair which climaxed with a presentation by the church's Folk Music Group of the contemporary cantata "Godsend," by Avery and Marsh, a Christmastide drama entitled "The Journey of the Three Kings," by Henri Gheon, presented by the Play Troupe, and a concert of sacred Advent and Christmas music.

BATESVILLE AREA United Methodist Men met recently at Cave City United Methodist Church to view the film "People Called Methodists," which focuses on the growth of the church and its great leaders during the past two hundred years.



Batesville District Men Elect New President

Mr. Jim Fisher (center) of First Church Searcy has been elected to serve as President of the organization of United Methodist Men in Batesville District during 1976. Shown with him are District Lay Leader Marvin Gaither (left) and District Superintendent Floyd Villines (right).



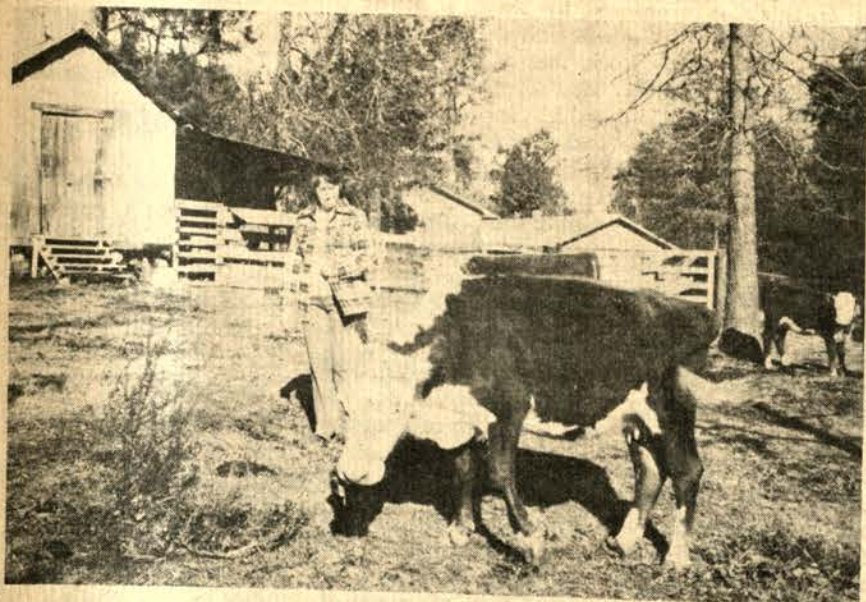
Twenty-foot Chrismon Tree

This 20-foot tree bearing 450 white lights and over 200 handmade Chrismon ornaments — all symbols of the Christian faith — was presented at First Church, North Little Rock, in a program entitled "Emmanuel, God With Us." The tree may be viewed each weekday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. A booklet explaining the meaning of each symbol is available to visitors.



Iva Hazle Day at Springtown

Mrs. Hazle, a member of the church at Springtown for over 60 years, was honored by the church on the occasion of her 83rd birthday. In addition to gifts and birthday greetings from members of the congregation and other friends, birthday greetings came from President Ford and Bishop Frank. Mrs. Hazle is shown beside Pastor David L. Driver as he reads one of the messages.



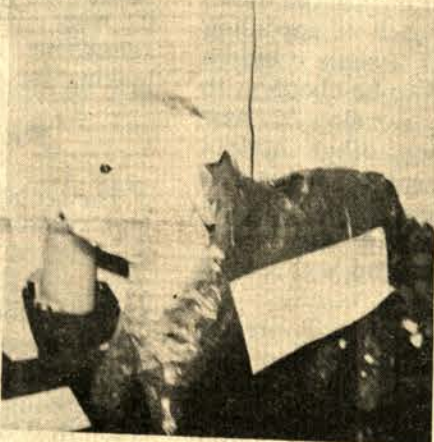
A Pure-bred For Heifer Project

Mrs. Mary Watkins of Fairview Church, Camden, and the pure-bred heifer she donated through her church's organization of United Methodist Women. Fairview Church raised \$838 for Heifer Project International, with the UMW contributing about half the amount.

†

'Give A Gift That Gives A Gift'

The congregation of Vantrease Church, El Dorado, has taken the above slogan seriously. Shown at right is a paper mache heifer created by Mrs. Edward Baker for use in the church foyer as a receptacle for Heifer Project International contributions. The Church's Commission on Missions made special appeals through talks, posters and up-to-date information on HPI, which will be a continuing project at Vantrease.



†

New Parsonage

Gardner Memorial's new parsonage at 11 W. Avalon, North Little Rock, was the scene of consecration ceremonies and an open house on Sunday, Nov. 30. Shown below is the pastor, Dr. Charles Casteel with Mrs. Casteel and daughter Sue Ann, welcoming a member of the congregation to the new home.



'Status of Women' adds to Talent Bank

EVANSTON, Ill. (UMC) — The names of 34 women interested in employment in a variety of fields have been added to the Talent Bank listing established by the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

The 34 women joined 109 already on file with the bank. Among the new listings are eight ordained women, 26 laypersons and five with missionary experience. Twelve are directors of Christian education and are seeking new positions in their chosen field. Two are prepared to teach in seminary, three seek positions in the music field, two in library work, four as administrators.

Physical and mental health, day care, drama, journalism, writing, counseling and teaching are among the fields in which the women are prepared to serve. They range in age from 21 to 65 and include three minority women — a Vietnamese, a Filipino and a Black.

One woman is co-author of a book in Vietnamese on public library administration. She was chief librarian of the United States Information Service library in Saigon and is interested in a position as reference librarian or library assistant.

Another woman currently is completing work on her Doctor of Ministry degree while handling three jobs. She is executive director of an ecumenical retreat center, pastor of a community church and a self-employed rancher in Wyoming.

Some of the women are seeking full-time employment while others are interested in part-time work or as resource persons for workshops and retreats.

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women will continue to update the employment section of its Talent Bank. The next project for the Talent Bank will be the compilation of information about women who have stated they are interested in membership on the national boards and agencies of the denomination.

†

GEORGE W. FAULKNER

George W. Faulkner of Horseshoe Bend died Nov. 16 at a hospital in West Plains, Mo., after a short illness. A member of the Horseshoe Bend United Methodist Church, he is survived by his wife, Mrs. Louise Wetzell Faulkner, president of the Batesville District United Methodist Women.

A native of Coal Hollow, Ill., Mr. Faulkner had been associated with the Twin City Produce Company. A veteran of World War II, he was a member of the Horseshoe Bend American Legion. He was secretary-treasurer of the Horseshoe Bend Volunteer Fire Company and was a member of the Rock Falls Mannie Lodge and of the Sterling Elks.

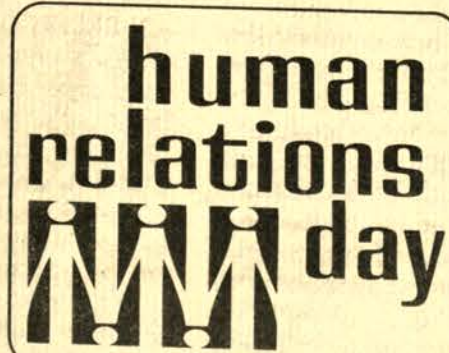
Other survivors are a son, Wilfred H. Faulkner of Tecumseh, Mich.; a stepson, Donald Wetzell of Arlington Heights, Ill.; a brother, John H. Faulkner of Sterling, Ill.; a sister, Mary Living of Montana, and three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held at Sterling, Ill., with the Rev. Jean W. Saltzman, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church, officiating. Burial was in Riverside Cemetery.

†

You can be there!

In more than a hundred places — helping thousands of persons find new hope in their lives — through your gifts



On
Jan. 25
1976

On this day we join our Lord in expressing a concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of all people.

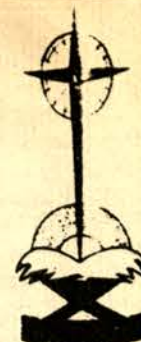
One Church — Many cultures



Order materials from
United Methodist Communications
1200 Davis St., Evanston, Ill. 60201

Wrestling with Temptation

By LARRY D. POWELL Pastor, Markham United Methodist Church, Little Rock



Lesson for December 28

Scripture for this lesson: Matthew 3 and 4.

Two Prior Concerns

Let us begin crystalizing our thoughts about the Temptation experience by considering two prior concerns. First, what do we mean by "temptation?" Ordinarily we understand it as an inclination toward evil or being enticed to do wrong. However, the writer of Matthew used the Greek word "peirazein," which has quite another meaning. "Peirazein" means to TEST, as opposed to tempt.

William Barclay explains: "What we call temptation is not to make us sin, it is meant to enable us to conquer sin. It is not meant to weaken us, it is meant to make us emerge stronger and finer and purer from the ordeal. Temptation is not the penalty of being a man, it is the glory of being a man. It is the TEST which comes to a man whom God wishes to use."¹ The "temptation" of Jesus then, is perhaps more properly understood as the "testing" of Jesus.

Our second prior consideration before approaching Matthew 4, concerns "who" is being tempted, or tested? We have missed the mark if we see Jesus here as simply a kind of cosmic actor of the highest order, moving from scene to scene, mouthing a script which had been prepared centuries in advance. We must recognize and appreciate the humanity of Jesus in this conflict if it is to have any meaning.

Well-meaning Christians have, through the centuries, endeavored to exalt Christ to a place worthy of the Son of God. However, this has often resulted in the minimizing of his human nature, and the accentuation of his divine nature. The greater result has been that we have come dangerously close to creating a super-figure who could not have made a poor choice even if he had wanted to. It is sometimes said, "Well, he was different!"

If his "human" nature was different from yours or mine, then how on earth can we speak of a "temptation" especially if Jesus already knew how it was all going to turn out anyway? Likewise, simply to say that it all took place to (simply) fulfill scripture, makes it somewhat mechanical doesn't it? I believe Matthew understood this experience (Mt. 26:56) as a part of our Lord's total choice and willful obedience to the will of his Heavenly Father. Our Lord's humanity is unmistakably identified with our own in Hebrews 2:18; "Because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted." And Hebrews 4:15 assures us, "(he) was in all points tempted like we are."

It is interesting to note that contemporaries of Jesus found it difficult to accept his divinity; today, many find it difficult to accept his humanity. Still others merely blanch the two natures together and consequently, conveniently explain our Lord's actions by referring to whatever nature (or mood) he happened to be in at the time.

Whatever our position, there is no denying that Matthew portrays the wilderness experience as a time of temptation and testing. Inasmuch as it is not too probable that a god will be genuinely tempted, the testing then, was directed toward the human nature of Jesus; anything less makes a sham of the dual nature and reduces the "temptation" to a ruse.

The First Temptation: Mt. 4:3

Matthew relates that Jesus was first tempted to turn stones into bread. There is a heavy symbolism here. The commentators agree that the command to "turn stones into bread" represents Jesus' temptation to use his miraculous powers to win leadership through feeding the hungry. This would have been a "no fail" method for collecting a following and gaining support. It would have been the easiest, quickest way to announce his messiahship.

Isaiah 49:10 had promised "They shall not hunger or thirst;" Jesus had every justification for resorting to this kind of appeal. Because he did not does not alter the fact that he was severely tempted to do so. Had Jesus elected to perform the spectacular, he could have prevented the ongoing banterings with the Pharisees, avoided the constant necessity to qualify himself, and established a kingdom predicated upon power.

What to do? Establish himself immediately as the uncontested Messiah, or choose the quiet, grueling, painfully slow approach of appealing to people in the spirit of love? People could be frightened, or even compelled to be obedient to God had Jesus chosen to develop a new theocracy, or there was one other option; instead of a king, he could become a servant, a Suffering Servant. In the fullest sense, I expect that the temptation to "turn stones into bread" was by far the most appealing and was a very genuine temptation indeed.

Additionally, The Interpreter's Bible states; "(The Temptation) was real because of his physical hunger. It was real because of its setting of wilderness and wild beasts, that is to say, in its accentuated loneliness: there was no touch of elbow to elbow in the ranks, no bugle blown: temptation is always a lonely business . . . thus, the story does not mock our human traits, but is our strength."²

The Second Temptation: Mt. 4:5

Temporarily, the scene has changed from the desert to the Temple at Jerusalem; "the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the Temple (RSV)." There was a pinnacle on one of the Temple's corners which measured 450 feet from the Kidron Valley below. Matthew tells us that Jesus is tempted to throw himself down from the pinnacle, thereby giving a demonstration of divine protection. The tempter even quotes scripture to show that if Jesus will perform this, he will not be harmed (v. 6, see also Psalm 91:11-12).

"The second temptation reminds us that scripture, depending on how one uses it, may be either the instrument of good or the instrument of Satan. This also is a warning to us. To try to force God to reveal himself by some spectacular act is not the language of faith but of unbelief and impatience (see Deut. 6:16, Ex. 17:1-7). When the Pharisees later demand signs from Jesus as proof of his messiahship, they will be refused (Mk. 8:12; also Mt. 16:1-4)."³ Again, the appeal is to sensationalism; Jesus is tempted to brandish his Messianic credentials.

Some years ago, I attended a dinner meeting of one of our Conference Boards. Dr. Ira A. Brumley was the honored guest. As it happened, Dr. Brumley was presented a special certificate of recognition which, someone sug-

gested, should be displayed in some prominent place in his office. Dr. Brumley's reply, in typical Brumley terse, poetic candor was, "I'll not put it on my wall. I don't believe in hanging diplomas and certificates all over the wall. I believe it you've got it, people will know it." Ira A. Brumley had it and, you may be sure, people knew it. Some things do not require formal announcement nor appeals to the extraordinary as proof of their authenticity.

Jesus was tempted to call attention to himself by exploiting the sensational. By refusing to "entertain and impress" the multitudes, he turned his back on the approach used by previous counterfeit messiahs: Theudas had promised to divide the waters with a word; Acts 21:38 tells of an Egyptian who claimed he could flatten the walls of Jerusalem with one word; Simon Magus had promised to fly through the air.

Why should Jesus not do these and more? If for no other reason, the people would expect something greater the next time, and something even greater the next. Someone has said it well; "If faith cannot believe without sensations, it is not really faith; it is doubt looking for proof in the wrong places."

The Third Temptation: Mt. 4:9

The scene shifts back to the wilderness atop a high mountain where the third temptation is directed to our Lord's political consciousness. Jews had long dreamed of the day when "all nations should honor and worship the God of Israel. George Buttrick reminds us that in the time of Jesus, six million Jews were scattered throughout the world and if the right leader were to appear . . . If the RIGHT LEADER . . . The third temptation was for Jesus to affirm himself as that leader; " . . . and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, 'all these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me' (Mt. 4:8-9)."

As has been implied in the foregoing, miracles and wonders were the only language some people could understand. Likewise, in some circles, the very mention of the Kingdom of God would immediately be understood in political terms. The Zealots, for example, had demanded the violent overthrow of Roman rule, and the establishment of a Jewish state. One of the disciples was a Zealot (Lk. 6:15) and it is not unlikely that among the Twelve, there were murmurs of political upheaval.

Jesus responded to this temptation by replying: "Begone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve'."

Jesus did not compromise. Christianity is not a faith predicated on compromise. However, we live in a day when we are tempted from every side to grant costly concessions. As individual Christians, and as collective congregations, let us exercise extreme caution while seeking to be "all things to all men," lest we end up being "nothing to no one."

¹ William Barclay, THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, vol. 1, page 56.

² THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE, vol. 7, page 270.

³ THE LAYMAN'S BIBLE COMMENTARY, page 24.

ASSIGNMENT: Please read Mt. 5:1-6:18 in preparation for the lesson, "Living by a Higher Law."

Living by a Higher Law

By LARRY D. POWELL *Pastor, Markham United Methodist Church, Little Rock*



Lesson for January 4

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:1-6:18.

Orientation: The emergence of social law was largely due to a desire for order and security. Consequently, when law is broken, not only is an ordinance violated, but personal security is also threatened.

The Pharisees radically interpreted the Law of Moses, from the perspective of laymen, whereas the Sadducees considered the law from the priestly perspective. Comparatively, the careful interpretations of the Pharisees often assumed the form of sharp prohibitions, until at last, the Ten Commandments became embellished by well over 900 pronouncements. Because the Pharisees considered themselves expert in the law, they enjoyed a certain security, even to the point of feeling superior to ordinary folk: "Lord, I thank thee that I'm not as other men."

It is not difficult then, for us to understand their consternation when Jesus and his disciples boldly contradicted their pious mouthings. Considerably more than some legal ordinance was at stake; their personal security was being threatened. The entire system upon which they had predicated their lives was being challenged as the carpenter persistently implied that there was something greater than or "beyond" the law.

Sometime later, Jesus would impress this same claim upon the mind of a young ruler (Lk. 18:18-25); even though the young man had observed the law to the letter, Jesus said, "One thing thou yet lackest."

In this week's lesson, we see Jesus instructing the disciples regarding the "higher law" which challenges one beyond the legal duty.

The New Moses

It is interesting to note that in Luke's account of this particular narrative, the setting is in the **plain** (Lk. 6:17). However, in Matthew 5:1, Jesus and his disciples retired "up into a mountain." The fact that Matthew presents Jesus as delivering this discourse (or several discourses, as is commonly held) on a mountain suggests that Jesus is the new Moses, proclaiming a higher law. The mountaintop setting, just as numerous references used by Matthew, is generally accepted to be an undeniable reference to the Law of Sinai. Just as in Exodus 24:1f, Moses is accompanied by a small group, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders, while the people as a whole are kept at the foot of the mountain, so is Jesus accompanied by Peter, James, and John, while the rest of the disciples and the crowds remain below. Matthew also records the Transfiguration (17:1) and Jesus' parting commandment (28:16) as having occurred upon mountaintops.

"Jesus is expressing his Lordship in the Sermon on the Mount when, after quoting an Old Testament, he says, 'But I say unto you (Mt. 5:39).' No teacher in Israel would have placed his own judgment above the Law of Moses. Even the greatest rabbis took great care in interpreting the commandments. But Jesus did not hesitate to suggest a higher law than that of his fathers (The International Lesson Annual, p. 159)."

Turning the Other Cheek: Mt. 5:38-39

By his own admission, Jesus did not come as a revolutionary to destroy the law nor even replace it. Rather, he sought to add a new dimension to that which was incomplete; he

had come to fulfill the law (5:17).

Exodus 21:23-25 reads; "If any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Perhaps our initial reaction to this quotation (see also Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21) is to shudder at its explicit cruelty. However, the "law of retaliation," as we refer to it, was actually a merciful innovation.

In essence, it meant that if a person accosted you and cut off your finger, you should not cut off his hand, pluck out his eye, or perhaps even kill him; all you were allowed to do was **only** what had been done to you. In a day when a person might be killed simply because he had publicly insulted another person, this law of "equal retaliation" mercifully limited the vengeance.

Jesus limited it even further; "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: **but** I say unto you . . . whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." He was not canceling out the Law of Moses; he pointed rather, to a higher law. Violence begets violence and retaliation is returned with retribution. However, when the spirit of Christ enters into a man, motives for action become different; not how can I get even, or better, get the best of someone; but rather, "how can I go beyond what is required of me?" Vengeance is replaced by a higher motive and the destructive reaction is opted by the constructive act — "turning the other cheek."

It is sometimes remarked that the difficulty with teachers and preachers is that their own lives seldom approximate that which they proclaim. Horace Mann said, "It is well to think well; it is Divine to act well;" and who of us is not familiar with the poem by Edgar Guest which begins, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one anyday; I'd rather one would walk with me than merely show the way."

However, I must confess to you that upon consideration of Jesus of Nazareth, the most convincing evidence of his Sonship consists not in high-sounding theological profundities, systematic philosophical arguments, intellectual or emotional harangues, or the Bible-beating appeals of either liberals or conservatives.

The most authenticating element of the biblical and historical record about the Nazarene is that, by the power of God, he was the embodiment of his teachings. He not only approximated what he preached; his life was his sermon: he spoke of love, and we learn that little children sensed such about him that they ran to sit on his knee; he wept over the death of Lazarus, his friend, and again over an entire city; he loved those whom society had rejected — the physically and spiritually infirm.

He spoke of forgiveness and later, as he hanged from the Cross, had every opportunity to contradict his teachings; but no, he stamped them indelibly upon the pulse of eternity; "Father, forgive them . . ." Previously, the Pharisees had sought to either abort his mission or to "do away with him" and at every turn, his response was not to craftily devise some scheme to "get even" or to be "avenged," but without fail, he "turned the other cheek." Consequently, the Jesus of the Gospels is not "a bluster, a bluff, an empty show," but the Messiah who was in every sense of the word "authentic."

The Second Mile: Mt. 5:41

Because Palestine was an occupied country,

citizens could be compelled or impressed into the service of the Romans. There was always the possibility that at any moment, a Roman might place his hand upon someone's shoulder and charge them with some duty. Such was the case of Simon of Cyrene when, quite unexpectedly, he was snatched from the crowd by the Roman soldiers and compelled to bear the cross of Jesus.

One of the most annoying laws was the one which allowed a soldier to force any citizen to carry his pack for a distance not to exceed one mile. In addition to the obvious imposition, this liberty was also a most humiliating experience. We may be sure that a citizen would not go one step beyond what the law required.

Again, Jesus points beyond the law; "If anyone presses you into service to go one mile, go with him **TWO**." "That is a noble utterance," you say, "but is it practical?" No, it is not the practical thing to do, anymore than turning the other cheek is the practical thing to do, but it **IS** the Christian thing to do. Moreover, we see again the personification of this particular teaching in the life of the teacher.

While pinioned to the Cross, struggling for a precious irregular breath, he did not forsake all that had gone before. There he hanged, Seed of Israel's race, cast down; Prince of Peace, tormented; Rose of Sharon, withering. Victimized by mockery in the name of justice, betrayed by one of his own, abandoned by them all, save one, spectacle for all to leer at, an object of insult, even in dying. How easy it would have been to scream some scathing, hateful damnation upon those who delighted in watching the last bit of life ooze from him. But no, he began to pray in their behalf. The law had said that a person ought to love their neighbor as they loved themselves; but then, that is just going the first mile. To love those who "despitefully use you and persecute you," that is going the second mile.

The Royal Law: Mt. 5:43-47

How may love be legislated? How do you compel a man to love his wife, love his neighbor, love his enemy, love his job? Is it possible to compel someone to love God? There is a command; "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart (Deut. 6:6-7)."

LOVING God strictly because of a command to do so, or striving to be super-religious because of "fear," or even "loving" our neighbor simply because the Bible commands it, hardly approaches the dimension of love to which Jesus referred.

Loving God because of joy and thanksgiving is considerably different than being afraid that He is going to "get you" if you don't. Likewise, loving our neighbor only because the "Bible says to do it" is a far cry from the kind of fulfilling relationship which blesses the lives of all those involved; not out of a sense of duty, but in the spirit of celebration.

Jesus pointed to something higher than law. Perhaps Alfred Adler provides the apt conclusion which, as Jesus directed, causes us to examine our **motives**, as well as our actions.

"There is a Law that a man should love his neighbor as himself. In a few hundred years it should be as natural to mankind as breathing or the upright gait; but if he does not learn it, he must perish."

NEXT WEEK: "First Things First." Please read Matthew 6:19-7:29 in preparation for this lesson.

Thoughts on the Church

To the Editor:

I appreciate your interviews with Bishop Stokes, Dr. Kenneth Kinghorn, Dr. Oral Roberts and Dr. Ross Whetstone, excerpts of which appeared in the Nov. issue of the Methodist. It was good and valuable reading.

I would like to express a few thoughts concerning one of your questions, "What do you see as the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of The United Methodist Church?"

First: We need to renew our faith in the triple leadership of the Holy Trinity. God's providence provides fortification against all side-tracking agencies of Satan. The Son of God our redeemer and giver of saving grace and the Holy Spirit, our comforter, guide, illuminator and inspiring power. Yes, the crying need of the church today, is a consciousness of the Holy Spirit's divine personal presence.

Second: We need to renew our faith in the value of evangelistic activities. Methodism has always furnished its share of intellectual and spiritual force through evangelistic methods to the glory of Christ. Our church has always favored the evangelistic note. The real objective of Methodism is evangelism, and her impelling motive is to get people to accept Christ, and today we need the revival fires rekindled.

Third: Of course we must give due consideration to our human resources, and especially to the present and future generations of our young people, for they will furnish our leaders and church officials, and it is here we find a great weakness. We need to reaffirm our

belief in the fundamental principles of Methodism, church polity and teach them to our young people . . .

We need to teach our membership to love the Methodist Church with a passionate affection, with every fiber of their being. We need to teach them that the church is not a place of entertainment, but a holy place of worship. Many young people are thinking of the church as a social or financial institution. Let them know that the Church, founded upon the Deity of Christ, is to move like a mighty army against the gates of hell with pentecostal power.

Another weakness, that makes the fires of spirituality hard to keep burning in our church, is the complex machinery of the church. Often the pastor and the membership are dazed at the number of things that must be done. We should be careful, not to have too many organizations within the church.

Joseph D. Rogers
222 Egan Street
Shreveport, La.

'WHAT METHODISM NEEDS . . .'

To the Editor:

In recent articles and editorials we've read a lot about returning to the "basics" as a means of solving the present membership slide. Except for *Good News*, the evangelical renewal movement, I have yet to read any clear definitions of what the "basics" are. Isn't a belief in the *literal bodily* resurrection of Jesus an important basic? Naive? If so we evangelicals

accept the label along with such men of faith as the authors of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, St. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and our own John Wesley. The Apostle Paul said " . . . if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless . . . " (I Cor. 15:17).

Our original Articles of Religion CLEARLY state that "Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and *took again his body* . . ." But the 1972 General Conference liberalized our doctrinal standards so now our original Articles and Confession that contained this vital statement are called "Landmark Documents" and are "not to be regarded as positive juridical norms for doctrine . . ." (p. 48, 1972 UM Discipline). How many of our clergy have left the historic faith? A 1965 poll showed that only 49 per cent (LESS THAN HALF) of Methodist clergy believe that Jesus arose *bodily* from the grave (Time, May 8, 1972).

In his now famous speech, Dr. Edmond Robb expressed the opinion that our seminaries bear much of the blame. He noted that the late professor Dr. Claude Thompson from Candler School of Theology (United Methodist) wrote in *Christianity Today* (1971), "What can we expect from our pulpits when our occupants are men trained under teachers who profess no faith in God, doubt His existence, regard Jesus as only a good man and not a Savior . . . minimize the authority of the Bible, do not believe in life after death, and have long since come to regard our evangelical heritage as out of date? . . . Unfortunately, it seems more difficult to secure evangelicals as faculty members." Dr. Robb said "There are some notable exceptions to this but they are all too rare. The bias is all too evident!" Why aren't there a proportional number of evangelical professors in our seminaries if we are really "pluralistic"? . . .

It appears that what Methodism needs is a modern Reformation. The 1976 General Conference will have an excellent opportunity to change the course of the church. We laity, *men and women*, need to voice our opinions to those who will represent us at this conference. I also suggest each of us re-examine our own personal faith and seriously consider what we believe are the "basics."

Mrs. Ben O. Crain
4808 Westwood Ave.
Little Rock, Ark. 72204

DESCENDANT OF PIONEER SETTLER DIES

To the Editor:

In view of the family connections, I thought readers would be interested in knowing of the death of Mr. Walter W. Brown of El Dorado, a retired Rock Island trainman and member of a pioneer Union County family. He died Nov. 4.

Mr. Brown was the grandson of Warner Brown, pioneer settler, who 125 years ago gave a city block for a cemetery and site of the Methodist Church in El Dorado . . . Mr. Brown, a member of the Southside Baptist Church, lived most of his life near the old farm site a few miles south of El Dorado.

Survivors include a son, William W. Brown, and four grandchildren, Warner Brown, John Brown, Jody Brown and Mrs. Lynda Sims, and four great grandchildren, all of El Dorado.

Grover A. Zinn
615 Wesson St.
El Dorado, Ark.

(Continued on page eleven)

High school leaders becoming conservative, survey shows

By Tammy Tanaka
Religious News Service Staff Writer

NORTHBROOK, Ill. (RNS) — Religion is playing an increasingly important role in the lives of "outstanding" teenagers, according to the new 1974-75 national poll of high school leaders in the U.S.

Results of the sixth annual "Who's Who Among American High School Students" also revealed that students polled tend to be less tolerant of drug use (other than alcohol), more "puritanical sexually," and more "old fashioned" in their attitudes toward marriage and the women's movement than the group surveyed last year.

A comparison of the attitudes of student leaders in the last three or four years showed an increasing conservative trend in many social and moral issues.

The latest survey was conducted by Who's Who Among American High School Students, Northbrook, Ill., based on responses received from 22,000 high achievers. They represent 235,000 high achievers featured in the 1975 edition of Who's Who. Most participants were high school seniors who are now college freshmen.

Of the total sample: 42 per cent were male, 57 per cent female, 1 per cent gave no answer; 90 per cent Caucasian, 7 per cent Negro, 3 per cent other; 52 per cent Protestant, 29 per cent Catholic, 2 per cent Jewish, 14 per cent other, 2 per cent no answer; 74 per cent public school, 15 per cent private school, 9 per cent parochial, 3 per cent no answer; 19 per cent urban, 34 per cent suburban, 46 per cent rural small town, 1 per cent no answer.

Religion 'More Important'

The section on religion revealed that religion has assumed an increasingly important role among top 'teens in the last three years. The students who believe religion plays a significant role in their own moral

standards and actions increased from 63 per cent in 1972 to 86 per cent this year. Moreover, 50 per cent of this year's outstanding teenagers said the role of religion is "very significant."

Religion was considered "very significant" by 57 per cent Protestant, 48 per cent Catholic, 26 per cent Jewish and 37 per cent "other" students.

The percentage of those who feel religion is relevant in our society increased from 77 per cent in 1973 to 86 per cent this year. This year's total included 91 per cent Protestant, 88 per cent Catholic, 87 per cent Jewish and 72 per cent other.

An increasing number are also considering themselves members of organized religions — 80 per cent this year, compared with 70 per cent in 1972. Of those who considered themselves members of organized religions, 46 per cent said it was the result of parental influence; 36 per cent made the choice on their own.

Concerning religious beliefs, 78 per cent of the student leaders polled said they believed in a personal God or Supreme Being. An additional 11 per cent believed in a "vital force or spirit in the world." Seven per cent were unsure of either a personal God or Supreme Being and 3 per cent said there is no personal God or vital force.

Expressing belief in a personal God or Supreme Being were 84 per cent Protestant, 85 per cent Catholic, 39 per cent Jewish, 56 per cent other. Belief in a vital force was expressed by 9 per cent each of Protestant and Catholic and 17 per cent each of Jewish and other.

Views On Drugs, Sex, Marriage

Questions on drug use revealed an increased alcohol use, but increasingly negative attitudes toward use of other drugs. This year's survey showed 79 per cent have indulged once or twice in alcohol — the same as last year. Over one-third say their parents approve of their drinking, 17 per cent said parents don't know, and

16 per cent say their parents disapprove.

Ninety per cent of student leaders in the latest poll said they have never tried hard drugs and 73 per cent have never tried marijuana. Legalization of marijuana was supported by 27 per cent of high achievers this year, compared with 42 per cent in 1973.

Participation in sexual intercourse — which increased steadily from 1970's figure of 16 per cent to 29 per cent in 1974 — appears to have reached a plateau. The latest poll also showed 29 per cent have participated in sexual intercourse, including 25 per cent Protestant, 29 per cent Catholic, 39 per cent Jewish, and 40 per cent "other."

Marriage is still the favored norm of the majority of students. The 89 per cent of high achievers who said they planned to marry were made up of 92 per cent Protestant, 90 per cent Catholic, 83 per cent Jewish and "other."

"Traditional" marriage is favored by 77 per cent, including 81 per cent Protestant, 77 per cent Catholic, 70 per cent Jewish, 69 per cent "other." Also by 75 per cent of males, 80 per cent of females.

"Trial" marriage was supported by 20 per cent, including 15 per cent Protestant, 21 per cent Catholic, 26 per cent Jewish, 27 per cent "other."

In cases involving an "unwanted pregnancy," 41 per cent of students polled supported abortion. This included 40 per cent males, 41 per cent females; 46 per cent Protestant, 19 per cent Catholic, 83 per cent Jewish, 53 per cent "other."

Abortion was opposed by 56 per cent, 54 per cent of males, 56 per cent of females; 50 per cent Protestant, 76 per cent Catholic, 13 per cent Jewish, 42 per cent "other."

The "Equal Rights Amendment for women" was supported by 63 per cent of students polled, including 63 per cent male, 64 per cent female; 59 per cent Protestant, 65 per cent Catholic, 70 per cent Jewish, 72 per cent "other."

Arkansas Methodist

'Civil religion' not so bad, scholar says

PHILADELPHIA (RNS) — A prominent Roman Catholic sociologist and lay theologian described four types of civil religion found among white Protestants in an address to the international convention here of the Religious Education Association (REA).

Dr. Michael Novak, executive director of the Ethnic Millions Political Action Committee, was one of several scholars who spoke on various aspects of the convention's theme: "Patriotism, Piety and Pedagogy: Confronting Civil Religion."

As the first type, Dr. Novak identified "the Northeastern variety," although he said it is not limited to that area of the country. Its adherents, he commented, owe their allegiance "to Boston and send their children to Andover and Exeter and to the Ivy League Schools." This Northeastern civil religion "has the strength of being moral without losing money or power," Dr. Novak wryly remarked.

He described the second type as the "Bible Belt variety," which is to be found in New York and Pittsburgh as well as the deep South. This type, Dr. Novak said, is represented by such people as Andrew Jackson, Lyndon Johnson, and Ronald Reagan, who "always have to prove themselves" to the Northeasterners.

The "middle" type, the third variety, is "more secure than that of the Bible Belt," Dr. Novak commented. He

cited President Ford and Hubert Humphrey as representatives of this category.

As the fourth variety, Dr. Novak described "purifying civil religion," characterized by the desire to reform society without recognizing that "no progressive legislation can pass without the support of the working class."

'A Long Tradition'

Dr. Robert Bellah, professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, who wrote an important essay on the subject in 1967, told the REA convention that civil religion has had "a long and honorable tradition" in the United States.

Rejecting the view that civil religion would reduce religion itself to its lowest common denominator, Dr. Bellah suggested that American history would have proceeded differently had the Declaration of Independence declared that "only whites were created equal, and that blacks, by nature, were born for slavery."

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, noted that the controversy over civil religion in recent years has tended to focus on "the aura of evangelical acceptability surrounding the Eisenhower, Johnson and Nixon White House."

But the evangelical theologian pointed out that although evangelist Billy Graham had demonstrated support for Mr. Nixon in the religious community, he was joined by a Jewish rabbi (Baruch Korff) who solicited funds for Mr. Nixon's defense, and by a former Catholic priest (Dr. John McLaughlin) who served as a speechwriter for the former President.

Dr. Franklin H. Littell, a Temple University religion professor, described the success of "voluntary religion in America" as one of the most significant developments in the history of religion.

"In societies with liberty and self-government," Dr. Littell said, "religion is exciting and inspiring, while politics are pedestrian and problem-solving. In our tradition of limited government, we do not expect ultimate goals to be solved by governmental measures."

Sen. Lowell P. Weicker (R-Conn.) told the REA convention that America needs men and women who are willing to "stand up and take the heat of living a Constitution that others died to bring into being."

He declared that "the Constitution of the United States is the largest single factor responsible for our national and personal success; yet that Constitution is about to be forgotten or compromised into oblivion."

'Face moral issues now,' theologian urges President Ford

PHILADELPHIA, (RNS) — A prominent evangelical theologian has called on President Ford to "put his life on the line politically" in providing ethical, as well as political, leadership for America.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, founding editor of Christianity Today and now lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, writes his vision of the United States in an open letter to the President in the January issue of Eternity, an evangelical monthly published here.

"As never before," Dr. Henry declares, "we need bold indictments by men at the top concerning the materialistic greed and military priorities of

the great powers; the pragmatism that outruns moral constancy in political and diplomatic commitments; the lack of idealism and the disinclination for sacrifice on the part of the human masses; the gray mediocrity of modern life; the repressive systems that allure young moderns under the camouflage of social justice."

The theologian expresses gratitude for President Ford's "forgiving spirit," while criticizing his pardon of former President Nixon "because the pronouncement dimmed mercy and justice." According to Dr. Henry, "where an offender acknowledges no guilt and judges himself innocent, public pardon is inappropriate; in such a context forgiveness loses moral power and readily accommodates political motivation."

On The Dangers Of Detente

With regard to detente, the theologian warns that "if detente muffles our unshrinking protest against tyrannical suppression of millions of fellow humans, against totalitarian redefinition of morality, against repression of religious liberty, then we have lost the yardstick of true freedom and ourselves deserve early enslavement. When we fail to reproach injustice abroad or at home we weaken the foundations of tolerable existence from beneath future generations."

In Dr. Henry's view, "Americans yearn for their President to put his life on the line politically and to lead judiciously now instead of bargaining for future political opportunities. This may require facing the hostility of powerful power blocs and lobbies; it may mean firing our nation's sagging conscience to a fresh sensitivity of justice and truth."

The theologian acknowledges that a politician "must act within possible choices, whereas the prophet judges transcendentally." But, he adds, "new and promising possibilities can be shaped by a prophetic politician. Lincoln's immortal words helped heal a divided land. Eisenhower's vision of human dignity thrust American forces against Hitler's legions. Kennedy inspired young people with dreams of service."

In conclusion, Dr. Henry urges President Ford: "Stand tall in this time and not simply America but the world at large will one day bless your name."

Hunger fight should begin at home, says consultant

NEW YORK, N.Y. (UMC) — Looking at our own life styles and putting them in a global context is as important as giving massive emergency relief to poorer nations, according to a new United Methodist hunger consultant.

The Rev. Kenneth R. Colton, formerly on the pastoral staff of First United Methodist Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., was named in November as special consultant on hunger and nutrition by the Health and Welfare Ministries Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. His appointment is part of the board's campaign on world hunger.

"When we hear the words, 'world hunger,'" Colton explained, "we cannot assume it's somebody else's responsibility. We cannot let ourselves become an isolated island of plenty in a hungry world, and that means we have to learn what 'hunger' means in our own context."

There are many things people can do to fight hunger in their own communities, he said, among them, learning about "the foods we are manipulated to buy . . . which are not necessarily the most nutritious for us. Unfortunately, we are not as careful about what goes into our body as we are about what kind of cars or other products we buy."

Mr. Colton is preparing a workbook for local parishes which will help persons understand hunger and nutrition where they are, and hopes to put together a cassette series which would feature the leading thinkers around the world on hunger and nutrition. The 31-year-old clergyman also will examine the theological and political aspects of the hunger problem.

According to the Rev. John A. Murdock, chief executive of the Health

and Welfare Ministries Division, Colton's services as a consultant will be available free of charge to annual conferences and local congregations through the division offices or through the Hunger Research and Information Center, 1001 Green Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48105. Mr. Colton will base his operation in Ann Arbor.

News in Brief

Following a two-day consultation on church architecture for black congregations held in Nashville, Tenn., the Rev. Glenn S. Gothard, building consultant for the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, said there is general agreement that black congregations should quit buying "hand-me-down" inner-city church buildings that have been deserted by whites.

To Be A Spark

Illustrated devotional booklet, 44 pages. For your copy mail \$2 to cover cost of booklet and mailing to: Verna Williams, 8100 Sunny Drive, Mabelvale, Ark. 72103.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

The First United Methodist Church, Third and South Denver, Russellville, Arkansas 72901, is seeking a lay assistant to the pastor. Job specifications will be furnished upon request.

Interested persons should apply in writing to the church including with his or her application a transcript of college courses and the names of three persons to be contacted as references.

Holy Land and Greece Tour

Departs March 9, 1976. One of the highest recommended Holy Land tours in America. Tour arrangements by Donald E. Wildmon. \$899 from New York. Write for brochure. Plenty of references available.

Donald E. Wildmon
Box 1368
Tupelo, Miss. 38801
Phone 601-844-4500

For
COLDS
take 666

TWENTY used church pews with loose cushions available about March 1. Terms cash. 25 per cent advance payment desirable. Call 889-2612, or write Box 2, Perryville, Ark.

LETTERS

(Continued from page ten)

MANDATE?

Gentlepersons:

Please develop a ministry to change the names of the following towns in Arkansas:

Frenchmen's Bayou, Hartman, Mansfield, Quitman, Tinsman, Tuckerman, Foreman, Mandeville, Manila, Edmonson, Jefferson, Johnson, Old Joe.

Philip Lasiter
Rio Vista Community
Augusta, Ark.

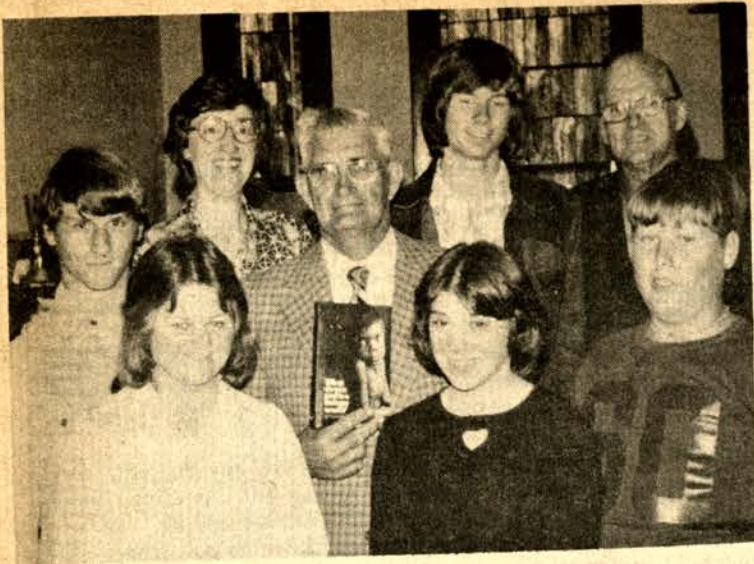
†

A STATEMENT OF POLICY

NOTE: Over the past year or more we have received a number of letters postmarked from the same Arkansas town but always signed with a different name and always giving, as a part of the address, a fictitious town or a town without any Post Office identification. The letters, addressed to the "From Our Readers" column, express legitimate concerns and we'd like to use them. But our policy requires that we have, on all published correspondence, what the Post Office calls an "audit trail." We want to hear from our readers and are glad to share their thoughts with others. But we must adhere to this policy. We will, upon request of the writer, withhold from publication his or her name.

Concerned that the particular writer mentioned above may wonder why his or her letters are not being published, and being unable to respond to the fictitious addresses, we print this note here for his or her information and for the purpose of stating to all correspondents this particular aspect of our policy.

—the editor



Focus On World Hunger

Participants in recent Batesville District Fall Youth Rally at Central Avenue Church in Batesville, included some of the district officers. Left to right: President Terry Hedden, Janice Strayhorn, Bonnie Dark, Mr. Jay Lawhon, McCrory layman, who gave an eye-witness report on hunger in Bangladesh gleaned during recent fact-finding trip there, Connie White, Huie Huenefeld, District Superintendent Floyd Villines, and B. J. Shoemaker. Other features of the rally included a talent show and a "Disorder Service" for Youth Service Fund.

†

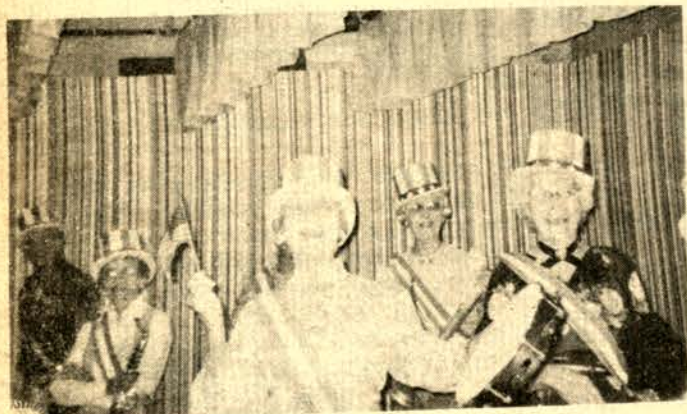
'Total Woman Meets God,' theme of Forrest City District meet



FEATURED SPEAKER
Miss Mildred Osment, president of the Jonesboro District UMW and Mrs. Wesley Freemyer, Forrest City District president, at Fall meeting held at First Church, West Memphis. The district president opened the meeting with a dramatic reading entitled "Who Am I?" Each unit responded to roll call by presenting a paper doll silhouette of its president.



A MINI-COURSE labeled "Mylady Meets Mission" included presentations by Betsy Campbell and Jane Glass of Marvell, and Martha Murray of Wynne, on the 1976 Studies in Christian Mission.



THE GRANDMOTHER'S BAND of Marianna "sang and played their way into the hearts" of their lunchtime audience. Christian Personhood was the luncheon emphasis. The all-day event was attended by 160 persons.



Jonesboro District Youth Council Officers

Among the 270 registered participants in recent Jonesboro District Fall Youth Rally were these Youth Council officers. Left to right: Cheryl Polzin of Blytheville, first vice chairperson; Bobby Box of Huntington Avenue Church, Jonesboro, chairperson; Joy Harrison of Leachville, secretary-treasurer. The theme of the rally, "The Miracle of the Pearl," was a follow-up to the distribution of \$1 bills earlier this year — each representing a grain of sand — with the challenge to use the grain of sand to produce a "pearl." Over \$500 from the project were presented during a Service of Celebration.

†



FORREST CITY ladies placed symbolic parts of a "total woman" on screen as the day progressed. The four areas emphasized included: Christian Social Involvement, led by Mrs. Albert Turner, Conway District CSI coordinator; Supportive Community (featuring a Show and Tell period — West Memphis' Project Compassion; Earle's "Happy Hour;" Helena's Bicentennial needlepoint kneelers; West Memphis Rosewood's Fun Calendar, and Parkin's Chrismons of the Parables); Christian Personhood, and Christian Global Concerns. Shown are Mary Jane Lindsey, Martha Powell and June Spotts.



A "SANDWICH BOARD" modeled by Becky Hall of Marvell depicted new program book. Martha Weaver, president of the hostess unit at First Church West Memphis, registers approval. Other special features of the day included music from Marvell and a Pledge Service led by Eda Claire Rucker of Parkin. Crawfordville and Earle units were in charge of fellowship, and Rosewood handled registration.

Poetry Panorama

by Barbara Mulkey

*"Christmas began in the heart of God.
It is complete only when it reaches the
heart of man." (Religious Telescope)*

The Reason for Christmas

In the little town of Bethlehem,
At the closing of the day,
Two weary pilgrims journeyed
To an inn across the way.

"No room for you," the inn-keeper said.
The stranger sadly bowed his head,
And in a voice both firm and kind, he asked,
"Is there nowhere I can find a place
For my wife to rest a while? You see,
She is soon to have a child."
"The stable then," the inn-keeper said,
"The straw, the hay, would make a bed."

So Mary and Joseph, their journey o'er,
Stood at last at the stable door.
And to their wonder and delight
A child was born to them that night.

Out of the heavens the angels came
And gathered around the new-born King.
Shepherds watching their flocks by night
Followed the star so strange and bright
That came at last to where He lay,
In the manger, on a bed of hay.

Wise men out of the East came thence,
Bearing myrrh and frankincense.
Not common gifts from out of the sod,
But royal gifts for the Son of God.

God looked down from His throne above
And gathered the Babe in His arms of love.
"My only begotten Son," said He,
"The Savior of the world you'll be."

Christmas Eve will mark your birth
With peace and good will to men on earth.
Yet down through the ages, time without end,
You'll be born each day in the hearts of men.

Ruth (Couch) Sears
Hot Springs, Ark.

The Christmas Story

A little child, the world's delight,
Was wrapped in love on Christmas night.
And angels sang, and shepherds came,
And wise men humbly spoke his name.

Then three and thirty years went by.
The child, to manhood, then to die.
A man of love condemned by hate
To bear the brunt of mankind's fate.

But Savior was the name he bore,
And Victory was the crown he wore.
The grave has not the final word,
And angels once again are heard.

A risen Lord, the world's delight,
Is here in love on Christmas night.
The Son of God, one and the same,
And wise men humbly speak his name.

Barbara L. Mulkey
Little Rock, Ark.

†



THE HELENA unit presented a skit on "Mission Coordinators." The unit made a surprise presentation at the close of the day, honoring District President Pat Freemyer of their unit with a Patron Membership, which is a \$300 gift to mission.

Arkansas Methodist